Questions and Answers from November 2020 NROC Webinar: Virtual Learning in Pandemic: Top Takeaways for the Future			
Question	**Area**	**Answer**	**Answered by**
How do you evaluate instructional resources?	Instruction	The National Standards for Quality Online Courses (https://www.nsqol.org/the-standards/quality-online-courses/) is a great resource for evaluating online courses and licensed content or instructional resources to be 'wrapped' into a course. The standard set gives guidance in content, instructional design, assessment, accessibility, and technology.	Cindy Hamblin, VLLA
What are good ways to get and keep students engaged over Zoom and other platforms?	Instruction	Small group interaction, make sure learning goals are identified clearly, greet students as they enter the Zoom classroom, have a fun activity to kickoff the time together. Heather Staker from Ready to Blend has some great suggestions here: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1TyV71IP9daM2ca7Ye_iwCmDw2A3nW_8k/view Some good strtegies are shared in "Learner-to-Learner: Finding Ways to Make Student Interactions Work Online" on https://ncvps.org/digital-transition/	Stacey, MVS Geetanjali, NCVPS
What are some ideas to enhance asynchronous discussions and student involvement?	Instruction	Smaller group discussions, videos or other media to kick off discussions, student leaders to keep discussions moving. Games, real world scenarios, teacher participation and feedback in discussions. Provide sentence starters make scoring clear, use a rubric to guide instructions and scoring, saving feedback for private and keeping modeling of appropriate discussion techniques for the public, present but restricted teacher participation.	Stacey, MVS Geetanjali, NCVPS

Questions and Answers from November 2020 NROC Webinar: Virtual Learning in Pandemic: Top Takeaways for the Future			
Question	**Area**	**Answer**	**Answered by**
What supports can be added for non-computer/Internet savvy students taking or forced to take online courses?	Instruction	Make sure not to overwhelm students with multiple technology tools. Consider what you want the students to experience and the pedogogical outcomes then find the right tool. Include a space where students can find answers to common questions or where they can ask questions. Try and be consistent in the tools, course design, LS used so students are not confused.	Stacey, MVS Geetanjali, NCVPS
What are some best practices during remote instruction that have shown to be beneficial to students with learning disabilities?	Instruction	Offer video lessons versus purely written instructions, smaller more focused assessments that don't cover as many standards. Open office hours for student-guided intervention. Videos have closed captioning option. Do not put too much content on any page, so they can focus on one thing at a time. Make sure content is accessible by screen reading technologies. Accessibility resources cann be found on https://ncvps.org/digital-transition/	Stacey, MVS Geetanjali, NCVPS
How are you supporting students with digital literacy gaps?	Instruction	Our VLLA members offer a student orientation course or a set of modules embedded in the online course that are intended to support and help students prepare for their online course. Content in the orientation course may include how to prepare your computer, computer skills needed (and instruction), how to communicate with the teacher, navigating the course, etc.	Cindy Hamblin, VLLA
What strategies have you found to be best for engaging students in virtual and hybrid learning environments?	Instruction	Build relationships first, get to know students and their interests. Start by asking a question or giving students a form of media to respond to. Together build norms and make them visible-this gives ownership over the learning space and community. Build in check-ins to talk with students and give feedback.	Stacey, MVS

Questions and Answers from November 2020 NROC Webinar: Virtual Learning in Pandemic: Top Takeaways for the Future			
Question	**Area**	**Answer**	**Answered by**
What are some side-by-side resources for teaching reading comprehension? Must have passage & questions on 1 page.	Instruction	Some resources: https://www.k12reader.com/subject/reading-skills/reading-comprehension/ and readworks.org	Stacey, MVS
Do you have ideas for practical experiences for online students who are in different locations and have different interests?	Instruction	Use of discussion boards built into the Learning Management System are a great way to engage students in content related dialogue as well as the opportunity to pose discussion questions that encourage students to relate the discussion to their area of interest. Training on how to create rich discussion posts is a training opportunity many of our members offer their instructors.	Cindy Hamblin, VLLA
What have you found keeps students engaged in the class, both when in Zoom and outside of that time?	Instruction	Small group interaction, ensure learning goals are identified clearly, greet students as they enter the Zoom classroom, have a fun activity to kickoff the time together. Heather Staker from Ready to Blend has some great suggestions here: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1TyV71lP9daM2ca7Ye_iwCmDw2A3nW_8k/view Some good strtegies are shared in "Learner-to-Learner: Finding Ways to Make Student Interactions Work Online" on https://ncvps.org/digital-transition/ Tips for Engaging Learners https://michiganvirtual.org/webinar/engaging-students-when-learning-from-home/	Geetanjali Soni, NCVPS and Stacey Schuh, MVS

Questions and Answers from November 2020 NROC Webinar: Virtual Learning in Pandemic: Top Takeaways for the Future			
Question	**Area**	**Answer**	**Answered by**
Are we learning bad habits being virtual?	Leadership	This is an interesting question, one I'd love to learn more about. Though there are many areas of struggle and students will lose ground (academically and/or socially) depending on their situation, I believe there are good habits that can come from being virtual, such as independence, flexibility, organization, self-regulation, written communication, and self advocacy. This doesn't, in any way, diminish the concerns that arise for student learning and wellness, but I think it's important to look at the positives as well. Adding an additional thought to Amy's response -- Differentiating between good and bad examples of virtual learning will need to be examined so the educational community is focused on quality online learning.	Amy Michalowski, VHS Learning
How does a digital learning community ensure its existence after Covid19 is over?	Leadership	The need for digital learning will continue and, I believe, grow following COVID 19. The opportunities digital learning can offer to enhance and expanding learning for students will continue. Ensuring that the stakeholder community understands the difference in emergency remote and quality, well planned digital learning will be extremely important.	Cindy Hamblin, VLLA
What is the most important provision institutions should make during a pandemic or similar situation?	Leadership		

Questions and Answers from November 2020 NROC Webinar: Virtual Learning in Pandemic: Top Takeaways for the Future			
Question	**Area**	**Answer**	**Answered by**
What were some things you had in place which helped you quick react and support schools as they moved to digital/vitual learning?	Leadership	We have a variety of orientation and support resources for students, site coordinators, and teachers. These resources helped schools could quickly transition to using online courses to fill needs. In addition, our organization has a policy handbook that is clear so that schools, students, and parents understand exactly what to expect from our programming. This type of transparency helped ensure that school administrators had the information they needed to make informed decisions in an efficient manner.	Amy Michalowski, VHS Learning
Have you or others in your state started to develop a plan to address learning loss, or the COVID slide? If so, what are the strategies you plan to implement?	Leadership	We've launched several efforts. In addition to "Gaps and Gains" shared here, we are also discussing larger scale needs going into the uncertainty of upcoming winter/spring learning environments.	Ryan, MTDA
I think we have generally done a poor job in the emergency application of online learning. Has this damaged the future use of online education? If so, what needs to be done in the future?	Leadership	Like face-to-face, online has always been delivered in a continuum of quality with many incredible examples of teachers providing exceptional educational experiences. My hope would be that a much better understanding evolves among school leaders and teachers around effective online teaching/learning. The VLLA programs have been working to clearly define what online learning is and what remote learning is. In the resource list for this session, you will see a link to Distance Learning Options for districts that shows the continuum. We need to continue to build upon the good things that our community does to create high quality online education and well-trained educators and help inform the public about the continuum of emergency remote to high quality blended and online learning.	*In session responses by panelists*

Questions and Answers from November 2020 NROC Webinar: Virtual Learning in Pandemic: Top Takeaways for the Future			
Question	**Area**	**Answer**	**Answered by**
What type of support have you provided for parents of elementary students that are learning remotely/online/virtually? Have you surveyed parents on their perspectives?	Leadership	Here are a series of resources our team has provided to educators and the state of Montana as a whole in the past year to help. http://montanadigitalacademy.org/schools/online-learning-resources-for-schools/ One of the ways we reached out to parents is through short webinars that were recorded so they could view it when needed. Here is a link to one example: https://michiganvirtual.org/webinar/tips-for-supporting-parents/ . We have also engaged with parents to find out what was most difficult during this time. https://michiganvirtual.org/research/michigan-voices/ .	Bob Currie, MTDA Ryan Schrenk, EdReady Montana Stacey Schuh, MVS
How can we support struggling learners virtually? How can we build rapport from a distance? How can we get parents to support	Professional Development	We have found that it is helpful to have strong local support for students, and personal outreach to struggling students via phone or skype can make a big difference. As is the case in a bricks and mortar setting, students are more responsive when they know someone is in their corner. In our organization schools provide a site coordinator, who takes on that role as primary site-based support. We have seen increased need to work with parents this year, given the number of students in full-remote schooling. We have found it helpful to increase our messaging to families. For example, we provided parents with a tip sheet for supporting their student: https://go.vhslearning.org/l/86702/2020-10-28/6rp75z/86702/1603905667lm6k8G9k/Parent_Helpful_Tips_FY2021.pdf	Amy Michalowski, VHS Learning

Questions and Answers from November 2020 NROC Webinar: Virtual Learning in Pandemic: Top Takeaways for the Future			
Question	**Area**	**Answer**	**Answered by**
How to manage the mental strain of teaching adults and children during a pandemic?	Professional Development	SEL support for teachers and principals is just as important as SEL support for students during this academic year. Our Supervision and Instruction Team has spent the past two weeks making an individual contact to each principal and teacher on our faculty just to check in and to make sure they are monitoring their own self-care needs. For those who disclose they are struggling, it give us the opportunity to have a conversation and share health and wellness resources with them.	Jeff Simmons, IDLA
How do we encourage better attendance to and participation in remote class meetings?	Professional Development	Engagement is a real challenge this year, for both f2f, hybrid, and online classrooms. For those teachers conducting remote meetings or live check ins, consider the same engagement strategies you use f2f. What that strategy looks like in a Zoom meeting may be different, but the concept is the same. For the most part, good teaching strategies from f2f are still good teaching strategies online.	Jeff Simmons, IDLA
What kind of adaptations to curriculum are most appropriate?	Professional Development	We have encouraged teachers to think about what is most important in their curriculum. We are not calling this a "power standard" because we don't have power standards identified in our system. But look for the most important items and focus on those. Also look for areas within a course where a standard is assessed more than once. That might be a place where you can lift a little bit of the load from students this year.	Jeff Simmons, IDLA

Questions and Answers from November 2020 NROC Webinar: Virtual Learning in Pandemic: Top Takeaways for the Future			
Question	**Area**	**Answer**	**Answered by**
How do you engage students for remediation/acceleration when they won't join a virtual meeting?	Professional Development	We are looking to create a pool of mentors who can reach out and connect with students who have been inactive. We would like to provide them a mentor who is relatable to them, can help us better understand why the student is inactive, and who can help encourage them to log in and move forward in their courses. We also believe there will need to be some SEL supports provided to students through this group.	Jeff Simmons, IDLA
What are the most important things you focus on in your professional development with teachers?	Professional Development	Amy: I'm sure the most important things vary a bit by program - we focused our training program on some of the critical aspects of quality teaching that teachers needed first, such as LMS training, understanding teacher expectations, building community, providing quality feedback, and differentiation. We coach many of our other skills through our faculty advising program	Amy, VHS Learning