



Arizona Department of Education

Instructional Time Model (ITM): Frequently Asked Questions

Last Updated: August 31, 2021

Adopting an Instructional Time Model (ITM)

Q: Will ADE be approving ITM submissions?

A: No, ITM submissions will be used by ADE to understand which schools are utilizing the flexibilities authorized in HB 2862, the types of flexibilities being operationalized, the extent to which a school is deviating from in-person, teacher-led instruction, and the way attendance will be tracked under each flexibility. ADE will not be approving or rejecting ITM submissions, but rather maintaining ITM submissions as documentation for future audit purposes.

Q: Are schools required to submit an ITM to the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) before beginning instruction as defined in the ITM?

A: No, HB 2862 allows schools to begin providing instruction pursuant to an ITM as soon as the ITM has been approved by the governing board. ADE will provide a template for reporting ITMs, but HB 2862 does not require submission of the template prior to beginning instruction under an ITM.

Q: Are governing boards required to approve an ITM on a template provided by ADE?

A: No, school districts and charter schools will submit information about the ITM to ADE using a template provided by ADE but are not required to use the template itself in the governing board approval. Governing boards and local communities will likely want to review more information/additional details about the proposed ITM than will be required to be reported through the ADE template.

Q: Can CTEDs submit an ITM?

A: No, HB 2862 applies to instructional hour requirements prescribed in ARS 15-808 and 15-901 but does not identify applicability to ARS 15-393.

Q: We are late to the game with this and are not sure how quickly we can get the governing board meetings going. If we held the first meeting before the start of the school year and then planned for the second hearing right at the start of September, would we be able to start the students remotely who want that option, or would we need to wait until after the second hearing in September?

A: HB 2862 allows schools to begin providing instruction pursuant to an ITM as soon as the ITM

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has been approved by the Governing Board.

Q: Our small charter school plans to open this August with in-person learning as its only instructional model. Due to our small teaching staff, we will not offer remote or hybrid options. However, in the case of a significant increase in COVID-19 community transmission levels, we may need to implement a remote or hybrid option for a period of time. If this emergency scenario is the case, do we need to hold two public hearings as noted in HB 2862?

A: If a school district/charter school intends to use remote instruction or would like to have the option to use remote instruction this year, an ITM should be adopted to define how alternatives to in-person, teacher-led instruction will be utilized and the attendance procedures that will be used for days on which instruction does not take place in person. A school district may adopt an instructional time model after two public hearings and governing board approval. A charter may adopt an instructional time model after governing board approval.

Q: Does a district or charter need to complete an ITM if it has no intention of offering any remote/alternative learning models?

A: No, a district or charter that will only offer in-person instruction or remote instruction through an approved Arizona Online Instruction school is not required to adopt an Instructional Time Model.

Q: If the same distance learning processes remain from last school year, is the district still required to submit an ITM for this school year?

A: Yes, a district or charter must adopt an Instructional Time Model if the district or charter intends to continue the types of remote instruction that were previously provided pursuant to a Distance Learning Plan in FY 2021.

Q: If students participating in remote instruction will receive instruction for the same number of days and follow the same school calendar as in-person students, is it necessary to adopt an ITM?

A: Yes, with the exception of approved Arizona Online Instruction schools, any district or charter that intends to provide remote instruction in FY 2022 must adopt an Instructional Time Model.

Q: Is it necessary to submit an ITM for schools that are planning only to use distance learning as a last possible resort during FY22?

A: Yes, districts and charters must adopt an Instructional Time Model for FY 2022 to offer the types of remote instruction that were provided pursuant to a Distance Learning Plan in FY 2021.

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Q: Is it correct that a school district that plans to be in-person and has an approved AOI does not need to submit an ITM and in the event that a move is made to remote instruction, could do so via the AOI?

A: Please keep in mind that withdrawing students from brick-and-mortar schools and enrolling the students in Arizona Online Instruction schools during the first 100 days of the school year is likely to negatively affect the Average Daily Membership and funding generated by the students.

With that in mind, yes, if a school district or charter only plans to offer remote instruction through an approved AOI school, it is not necessary to submit an Instructional Time Model. However, if a school district or charter intends to offer remote instruction to students that are enrolled in brick-and-mortar schools, it would be necessary to adopt an Instructional Time Model to do so.

Q: Is a district or charter able to adopt an ITM in the future only if necessary?

A: Yes, a district or charter may adopt an Instructional Time Model in the future, but should consider that adopting an Instructional Time Model takes time and requires governing board approval. A better strategy would be to adopt an Instructional Time Model that describes the future circumstances under which the flexibility in the ITM will be utilized.

Q: Is it still possible to hold public hearings to adopt an Instructional Time Model?

A: Yes, a district or charter may adopt an Instructional Time Model at any time with governing board approval.

Q: Do the two public hearings have to take place by August 31st?

A: No, the public hearings are not required to take place by August 31st, but are required to take place before adopting the Instructional Time Model.

Q: How much time must pass between the two public hearings for an ITM?

A: There is not a minimum time period that must occur between public hearings for an ITM.

Q: If a school district has two public hearings on an ITM, in which meeting is the ITM approved?

A: A school district may approve an ITM after two public hearings, so the ITM should be approved in the second meeting.



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Q: What is the purpose of a school district having two meetings if the ITM is board approved at one?

A: It is a requirement in HB 2862. A school district may only adopt an ITM after two public hearings.

Q: Who is able to submit an ITM on behalf of a district/charter?

A: The ITM should be submitted by the Superintendent or individual designated by the Superintendent to serve as the point of contact for the ITM.

Q: Will the ITM template still be available after September 30th if an LEA decides to adopt an ITM later in the school year?

A: Yes, the ITM template will be available all year.

Q: Will submitted ITMs be posted for districts and charters to review and edit as needed after governing board approval?

A: No, the ITM should be submitted to ADE after Governing Board approval.

Q: Is there a deadline to submit for ITM?

A: No, districts and charters may submit new ITMs throughout the year as they are approved by governing boards.

Q: Can attendance be changed after the fact to accommodate remote students pursuant to an ITM?

A: Attendance recording under an ITM should reflect the procedures outlined in the adopted ITM, however the contents of an ITM are determined by each school district and charter school governing board so long as they include the required items outlined in statute. So long as a student has participated in instruction that meets the criteria outlined in the ITM, they may be marked present on the given day.



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Q: We have scheduled a special board meeting and have asked them to approve our ITM retroactive to the first day of school. Will this suffice or will the ITM only be active from the approval date moving forward?

A: HB 2862 was silent on retroactivity, but ADE does not intend to penalize schools whose ITM plans allow for retroactivity for emergency remote instruction in the first quarter.

The Department will be evaluating fidelity to the procedures outlined in an ITM during future audits. Compliance will be evaluated based on the parameters outlined in the ITM, but the contents and procedures are left to school district and charter school governing boards to determine, so long as they include the required items outlined in statute.

Q: Will the ITM need to be submitted annually or only if/when changes are made?

A: The guidance issued so far relates to procedures for SY 2021-2022. The Department will be evaluating additional needs for guidance and procedures for SY 2022-2023 over the course of this school year and more information pertaining to SY 2022-2023 will be released in the future. However, if any changes are going to be made to an ITM, the school district or charter school must meet the parameters outlined in statute for the adoption of an ITM.

Defining an Instructional Time Model (ITM)

Q: Do remote instruction days need to be identified on the school calendar? How do we capture small groups of students who require remote instruction due to illness or exposure to COVID?

A: Remote instruction days do not need to be specified on the school calendar in FY 2022, but the Instructional Time Model must define how remote instruction will be used to replace in-person instruction on certain days. For small groups of students, this could mean specifying the type of remote instruction that will be provided on days on which individual students are not able to attend in-person and how attendance will be reported on those days. For example, an ITM might specify that when students are not able to attend school in-person and require remote instruction, they will be offered the opportunity to join live classroom instruction through a Zoom meeting or complete a packet of work.

Q: Can remote instruction days be designated on a student-by-student basis rather than school wide?

A: Yes, Instructional Time Models may specify that remote instruction will be provided to certain students on certain days. This can include regularly scheduled remote instruction to a subset of



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the student population or ad hoc remote instruction when a student's individual circumstances require remote instruction for a limited period.

Q: Can weekend or evening hours as defined in an Instructional Time Model be used to make up missed days to allow Absent -DL days to be adjusted to In Attendance - DL?

A: Yes, districts and charters have flexibility to define how instruction will be delivered and the flexibilities that will be utilized, but must clearly define how instruction that takes place outside of an in-person classroom is being used to replated in-person instruction on certain calendars days for certain students.

Q: How does application of ITMs relate to something like quarantine or isolation for individual students or small groups of students?

A: Instructional Time Models may specify that remote instruction will be provided to certain students on certain days. This can include regularly scheduled remote instruction to a subset of the student population or ad hoc remote instruction when a student's individual circumstances require remote instruction for a limited period.

Q: Can a school offer the option of in-person or remote instruction at the same time? Also, can different schools within a district offer the option of in-person or remote instruction at different times?

A: Yes, an ITM may define remote instruction procedures that apply to specific schools, specific students, at specific times, or under specific circumstances.

Attendance Procedures

Q: How often is remote/DL attendance required to be submitted to ADE?

A: Attendance is required to be tracked on a daily basis and should be submitted to the department through the Student Information System following usual data submission processes.

Q: In terms of remote instruction, if a student was on a Zoom meeting for only two minutes, is the student counted as present?

A: Districts and charters must define in an ITM the specific attendance procedures for days on which instruction will not take place in-person. In designing attendance procedures, we encourage districts and charters to consider which activities best represent student participation/engagement in remote instruction.



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Q: Can schools use parent attestation forms for attendance? Are there any limitations on parent attestations being the primary attendance tracking method for asynchronous attendance?

A: Districts and charters must define in an ITM the specific attendance procedures for days on which instruction will not take place in-person. In designing attendance procedures, we encourage districts and charters to consider which activities best represent student participation/engagement in remote instruction.

Q: How does an ITM affect Bell Schedules? We have a 15-minute rule under which students that are more than 15 minutes late are counted as half-day attendance. Can we continue this rule with an ITM in place?

A: Districts and charter must define in the ITM the specific attendance procedures that will be used for days on which instruction will not take place in-person.

Q: If the district classrooms have the technology to allow students the ability to participate from home, in-real time in their classes (via classrooms cameras and interactive technology), do the students need to be reported as participating in distance/remote learning?

A: Yes, any day on which a student participates in remote instruction or is scheduled to participate in remote instruction, but is absent, must be reported.

Funding

Q: Are schools able to provide over 50% of total instruction remotely though an adopted ITM?

A: Yes, HB 2862 permits remote instruction in excess of 50% of total instructional time, however a school site that provides more than 50% of total instruction remotely will receive a negative funding adjustment of 5% of the Base Support Level for instruction over the 50% threshold (i.e. for a school providing 60% of total instruction remotely, 10% of the ADM will receive a 5% BSL reduction). Additionally, ADE will report schools that exceed the 50% threshold to the State Board of Education or Arizona State Board for Charter Schools who may require an application for Arizona Online Instruction.

Q: We are planning on applying for an AOI for School Year 2022-2023, but we have many families who want a remote learning option this year. If we have students who would want to opt into remote learning for this school year due to medical or health concerns and they



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end up being online and exceed the 50% threshold, would only those who opted into remote learning be calculated at the 95% level or would it apply to all students in the school district/charter school?

A: In Fiscal Year 2022, schools may provide up to 50% of the instruction provided to all students remotely before funding adjustments apply. Funding adjustments are calculated at the school level and not at the student level.

Q: Does individual student participation in remote instruction count against the 50%?

A: Participation in remote instruction is required to be reported at the student level, but the maximum amount of remote instruction that can be provided before funding adjustments is calculated at the school level. It is calculated as the percentage of instruction provided to all students enrolled at the school that is remote. The maximum is 50% in FY 2022 and 40% in FY 2023. If a school has students out for quarantine, it could easily exceed 50% of instructional time for the school. Are schools required to provide education to quarantined students and not get full funding? Funding adjustments do not apply until remote instruction makes up more than 50% of all instruction provided to all students at the school. This means that either half of the students in the school may participate in remote instruction every day or that the entire school may participate in remote instruction every other day before funding adjustments apply.

Q: If a school has 6 students quarantining and participating in remote instruction, but the rest of the student population is attending in person, how is the percentage of instruction that is remote calculated?

A: If there are 100 students enrolled in a school and all are enrolled for the entire school year, and 6 of the students participate in remote instruction every day while the other 94 students attend in-person every day, 6% of total instruction at the school will be remote for the entire school year.

Q: If a school has live instruction every day, but not on campus, will the school collect 100% without the 5% reduction?

A: No, if all instruction is remote, a 5% reduction will be applied to the 50% that is in excess of the maximum remote instruction before funding reductions.

Q: Is it accurate that 100% online AOs are funded at 95% for full-time students and 85% for part-time students, but 100% online ITMs would be funded at 97.5%?

A: Yes, that is correct. However, non-AOI schools that exceed 50% remote instruction (40% in FY 2023) will also be reported to the State Board of Education and State Board for Charter Schools, who will determine whether the schools must apply to become Arizona Online Instruction providers subject to the reporting and funding requirements in ARS 15-808.



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Q: If a handful of students learn remotely for 100% of the time, is the entire school counted as above the 50% remote maximum?

A: No, remote instruction is reported at the student level, but the total percentage of instruction that is remote is calculated/limited at the school level. If there are 100 students enrolled in a school and all are enrolled for the entire school year, and 6 of those students participate in remote instruction every day while the other 94 students participate in in-person instruction every day, 6% of total instruction is remote.

Q: Will schools be required to submit bell schedules to determine the percentage of instruction that is removed?

A: No, the percentage of instruction that is remote will be calculated based on the number of instructional days for enrolled students and percentage of those instructional days that are reported as remote through the new attendance descriptors.

Q: Is the negative funding adjustment for exceeding the maximum remote instruction a graduated penalty or is all funding immediately dropped to 95% when a school exceeds the maximum?

A: The funding adjustment applies only to the portion of instruction that is provided in excess of the 50% maximum remote instruction (40% in FY 2023). For example, if 60% of instruction was remote, the 5% reduction would be applied to the 10% excess and total funding would be reduced by 0.5%.

Arizona Online Instruction (AOI)

Q: Will school districts/charter schools need to submit an ITM for Arizona Online Instruction (AOI) programs?

A: No, approved AOIs may provide 100% online instruction without adopting an ITM or holding additional public hearings.

Q: We currently have an approved AOI for our school district/charter school and we are confused by this recent guidance regarding ITMs. Do AOIs now require two public hearings? Can you share any additional information about why a school district/charter school would have ITM and an AOI?

A: No, approved AOIs may provide 100% online instruction without adopting an ITM or holding additional public hearings. A school district/charter school may adopt an ITM to gain flexibility to



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provide some instruction outside of a teacher-led, in-person classroom to students that are otherwise in-person, non-AOI students.

Q: AOIs are not required to adopt a separate ITM, correct?

A: Correct, approved AOIs may provide 100% online/remote instruction without adopting an ITM.

Q: Is it correct that a school district that plans to be in-person and has an approved AOI does not need to submit an ITM and in the event that a move is made to remote instruction, could do so via the AOI?

A: Please keep in mind that withdrawing students from brick-and-mortar schools and enrolling the students in Arizona Online Instruction schools during the first 100 days of the school year will negatively affect the Average Daily Membership and funding generated by the students.

With that in mind, yes, if a school district or charter only plans to offer remote instruction through an approved AOI school, it is not necessary to submit an Instructional Time Model. However, if a school district or charter intends to offer remote instruction to students that are enrolled in brick-and-mortar schools, it would be necessary to adopt an Instructional Time Model to do so.

Q: For approved AOI programs, can you clarify the funding reductions compared to in-person instruction and ITMs that exceed the maximum remote instruction?

A: Districts and charters will only have a 5% funding adjustment for remote instruction provided pursuant to an ITM if remote instruction makes up more than 50% of the total instruction provided at a school (40% in FY 2023) and only for the portion that exceeds the maximum. On the other hand, for AOI, ARS 15-808 specifies that a pupil who is enrolled full-time in Arizona Online Instruction shall be funded at 95%, and a pupil who is enrolled part-time in Arizona Online Instruction shall be funded at 85%, of the base support level that would be calculated for that pupil if not enrolled in Arizona Online Instruction without any allowance for remote instruction before funding reductions begin to apply.

General Questions

Q: Where should we direct questions about ITMs?

A: Please direct questions about ITMs to SchoolFinance@azed.gov.

Q: Where can I find my specific school ID and CTDS numbers?



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A: School Entity IDs and CTDS numbers are available in AzEDS and at <http://www.ade.az.gov/edd/>

Q: For districts that have four-day calendars, must they have discussed the four-day calendar at two board meetings, or must the board hold two public hearings?

A: ARS 15-861, which was repealed by HB 2862, specified that a governing board, after at least two public hearings, may offer a four-day school week. Districts that previously held board meeting to adopt a four-day school week and do not plan to utilize any other flexibility that would require an ITM (such as remote instruction) may simply submit a letter from the governing board indicating that the district previously held two public hearings to adopt a four-day week and will continue to offer a four-day week.

Q: Can there be additional time given to submit school calendars?

A: Districts and charters are able to freely submit and revise instructional calendars until August 31st. After August 31st, districts and charters can revise instructional calendars by first submitting a request through Help Desk.