

**REPORT TO  
HAWAII STATE LEGISLATURE**

**Online Learning Task Force  
Act 275 SLH 2007**

**Participants**

**Steering Committee**

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**SUBJECT:** Online Learning Task Force

**REFERENCE:** Act 275, SLH 2007

**ACTION REQUESTED:** To create an online learning task force to develop a systematic plan to expand opportunities for online learning and develop a phased plan with desirable outcomes to enhance the learning experiences of students across the State.

**DOE REPORT:**

The Department of Education (DOE) convened a task force composed of members from the DOE, Board of Education, University of Hawaii System and the business community as requested.

The strategic goals of the DOE are:

1. Improve student achievement through standards-based education;
2. Sustain comprehensive support for all students; and
3. Continuously improve performance and quality.

The following goals and measurements were established to provide focus for the task force. The DOE is responsible for implementation of the plan.

<b>GOALS</b>	
•	Within 3 years, 10,000 of Hawaii's public secondary school students will take at least one online course during their school experience.
•	Within 3 years, all public secondary school students will have access to online remedial/regular/credit recovery learning materials that are designed to help them meet proficiency in Hawaii Content and Performance standards and increase on-time graduation rates.
•	Within 5 years, all public secondary school students will have access to online Advance Placement courses in the STEM disciplines.
•	Within 3 years, 500 of Hawaii's teachers will have completed training in online teaching.

These goals are aligned with the DOE's Strategic Plan.

<b>Phased Implementation</b>	
Phase I – Dec 2007	Complete legislative report
Phase II – July 2008	Complete studies on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policies and practices for online learning</li> <li>• Governance</li> <li>• Operational framework</li> </ul>



Phased Implementation	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student support infrastructure</li> <li>• Funding model</li> </ul>
Phase III – SY 2008-09	2,500 students using online learning
Phase IV – SY 2009-10	5,000 students using online learning
Phase V – SY 2010-11	10,000 students using online learning

**FINDINGS:**

- There are two types of online learning programs:
  - Full time online learning provider: enrolling school authorized to deliver comprehensive public education, also known as “Cyber Academy” – Example: Myron B. Thompson Academy
  - Supplemental online training: Online course available to students at a “regular school” – Example: DOE E-School

*Although Distance Learning is mentioned in this report, it is not included in the measurements for “online learning.”*

- North American Council for Online Learning (NACOL) conducted a statistically valid survey of DOE’s online status and needs for secondary schools. There were a total of 161 respondents for the high school survey, and 121 respondents for the middle school survey.
  - High School Survey
    - Current Usage of Online Offerings: 75% of respondents say they are using online learning in Hawaii
      - Credit recovery is the primary usage (82%)
      - Commercial providers and E-School are the prime sources of content
      - Schools limit the number of courses taken (42%) – typically from a computer lab
      - Onsite support provided – (72%)
      - There are teachers who currently teach online courses at their school (32%)
    - Top two reasons for current limitation of online learning
      - Lack of funding to cover cost of fees
      - Unaware that online learning opportunities exist
    - Level of Need
      - 55% point to remediation (not credit recovery)
      - 34% say “for students not doing well in traditional classroom”
      - 27% say “to fulfill graduation requirements”
      - High need high school courses same as other states
        - Algebra I
        - English I
        - Biology
        - AP Biology
        - AP US History
        - AP Calculus
      - Need for Foreign languages higher than most states



- 58% say need for online Professional Development for teachers and others
  
- Middle School Survey high need courses are:
  - Grade 8 English Language Arts
  - Grade 8 Math
  - Grade 8 Social Studies
  - Grade 8 Earth/Space Science
  - Computer Literacy
  
- A national perspective is provided by a recently published research document entitled: *Keeping Pace with k-12 Online Learning 2007* by John Watson and Jennifer Ryan, Evergreen Consulting Associates.
  - Online Learning Market growing at 25% annually . . . still less than 2% of all students are impacted.
  - 38 states have established e-learning initiatives.
  - Hawaii is among 14 states that have both full time and supplemental online programs.
  - 72% of school districts with distance education programs plan to expand offerings.
  - Florida virtual school – over 100,000 course enrollments in 2007-08.
  - In 2006, Michigan became the first state to require students to take an online course as a graduation requirement.



Figure 1: National summary of how online learning is being implemented across the country.

- Online learning is accessible throughout the state; many opportunities are “under the radar” and not widely known.
  - The DOE E-School and Myron B. Thompson Academy provide online courses statewide.
  - Over 100 schools have contracted with outside providers like NovaNet, All About Kids, Hippocampus, Imagine Learning, to provide online learning for a fee.
  - Teleschool provides distance learning and pod casting services to over 5600 students.
  - Many schools are utilizing reading, writing, and math tools to enhance student performance like Vantage Learning, River Deep, Plato, Explore Learning, and Atomic Learning.
  - There are also online assessment tools like Benchmark Tracker and Edison.
  - Institutes of Higher Education (IHE) like the University of Hawaii and Brigham Young University are involved with online learning for many courses. High school students are taking some of them.



- There is a definite need for more choices for learners besides regular school. Online learning has the potential to increase:
  - On-time or accelerated graduation rates (2010 graduation diploma requires 24 credits; any failure requires make up outside of established school hours.)
  - Broader range of alternative education accessible statewide
  - Remediation learning
- And provide choices for students and educators:
  - Attracting drop out students
  - Supplementing courses to home schooled students (online access may require enrollment in a DOE school)
  - Students requiring alternative, more flexible schedules
  - Suspended students (long term)
  - Remote areas with no teacher or highly qualified teacher available
- There are many Virtual School models from which to copy throughout the country.

Factors	Florida	W. Virginia	Texas	Kentucky
Virtual School	YES - Self-contained and state-funded – 128 full time (FT); 11 part time (PT) staff	Mostly a clearing house; Courses outsourced- 1 FT; 1 PT staff	NO Establishment of standards only	P20 Virtual Learning Initiative 6 FT staff
Grade Levels	Secondary	Secondary	Secondary	Secondary
Tuition and funding	Free for in-state - \$50M state funds  Chargeable for out-of-state	Local District or Parent pays after state funds are spent (\$450K state funds)	Online learning managed at local level – State funding available on a per student basis upon application	YES – local district, parents, scholarships - \$692K in state funds
Teachers	160 PT 318 FT	17 PT 4 FT Outsourced		48 PT 0 FT
Instructional issues	Individualized instructional support	Local school level support		Aligning curriculum, instruction, assessment – credit recovery

- Use of an accepted national service is an efficient and cost effective way to certify courses that are standards based.
- Student support involves both academic and technical support.



- Online learning requires the help of both technical and academic mentors.
- Support can be remotely provided.
- Onsite, face-to-face mentors are needed.
- Timely assistance is critical. Online courses are comprehensive and more challenging than originally anticipated by students.
  
- There is a need for teachers to be skilled in teaching online courses; they need to be "online trained."
  - Online facilitator
  - Online instructor – highly qualified teacher trained w/online skills
  - Online course designer
  
- Testing for credit will be a key factor for accelerated learning/ earlier graduation.
  
- School infrastructure plans are adequate.
  - Even though bandwidth requirements are tripling annually, funding for this infrastructure is supported.
  - There are over 54,000 networked computers in over 15,000 classrooms.
  - From a security, privacy, and access perspective, going beyond the school walls will be a challenge.
  
- There is a need to increase the number of computers available to students.
  
- Online learning is much more comprehensive and more difficult than perceived.
  - Courses must be aligned to standards.
  - Students get more perceived personalized attention.
  - Students progress at their own pace and therefore must have discipline.
  - Online learning can leverage available resources and provide better access.
  
- Funding mechanisms are varied and need to be supplemented.
  - E-School does not have line item general funding or full time teachers.
  - Currently, teachers are contracted to develop, revise and teach the online courses.
  - Myron B. Thompson Academy receives funding through the Charter school appropriations.
  - High schools offering online courses (other than E-School) are funded through the weighted student formula and grants.
  - Summer school fees are charged to students for remedial online courses.
  
- Online learning is deployed in a number of different configurations:

Course Delivery	Online or Face to Face (F2F)	Delivery Model	Provider	Funding Source
Online Courses Anywhere, Anytime	100% online	Online instruction with Virtual Meetings and Collaborative Student Workgroups	- E-School - Online Provider - IHE	School/State (per pupil cost) School provides site facilitator



Course Delivery	Online or Face to Face (F2F)	Delivery Model	Provider	Funding Source
Advanced Placement Courses – Online	100% online	Online instruction with Virtual Meetings and Collaborative Student Workgroups	- E-School - Online Provider - IHE	School/State (per pupil cost) School provides site facilitator
Hybrid Courses	Blended/Hybrid 60% online/40% F2F	Blended Learning with Highly Qualified (HQ) online Teacher	- E-School - Online Provider - IHE	School/State (prorated per pupil cost) School provides mentor/facilitator
Advanced Placement Courses – Hybrid	Blended/Hybrid 60% online/40% F2F	Blended Learning with HQ online teacher; Onsite mentor/facilitator	- E-School - Online Provider	School/State (prorated per pupil cost) School provides mentor/facilitator
Credit Recovery	Blended/Hybrid as appropriate	Onsite HQ core subject teacher	- Online Provider	School-based courses

- Beyond academic learning, today’s workforce is required to:
  - Adapt to rapid change;
  - Work effectively in teams;
  - Interpret and communicate information;
  - Use computers to acquire and evaluate data, organize and maintain files, process information;
  - Apply technology to specific tasks.
- DOE online learning system can be made available to adult learners and provide lifelong learning opportunities.
- Online professional development and training for all employees is becoming more available. DOE can increase the number of highly qualified teachers, administrators, and paraprofessionals through online learning.
- Online learning is not a panacea; it is an alternative.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

*Delivery Model – Two pronged approach*

1. Myron B. Thompson continues to be the full time cyber academy as a charter school.
2. Establish a Hawaii Virtual Learning Network (HVLN) for supplemental programs.
  - a) The DOE should expand and systematize the current online learning efforts to provide online courses to students in Hawaii
  - b) This HVLN will:
    - i. Provide the opportunity for a student to enroll in any appropriate online course(s), anywhere in the state.
    - ii. Establish criteria, evaluate and approve online courses to be offered. This can be outsourced to NACOL.





- iii. Provide training to Hawaii teachers to be online instructors.
  - iv. Augment schools with centralized support services to students.
  - v. Establish partnerships with institutes of higher education (IHE), private schools, charter schools, state virtual schools, and commercial vendors to provide Hawaii students with as many online courses as possible.
- c) Principals will decide on online delivery models appropriate for the student.

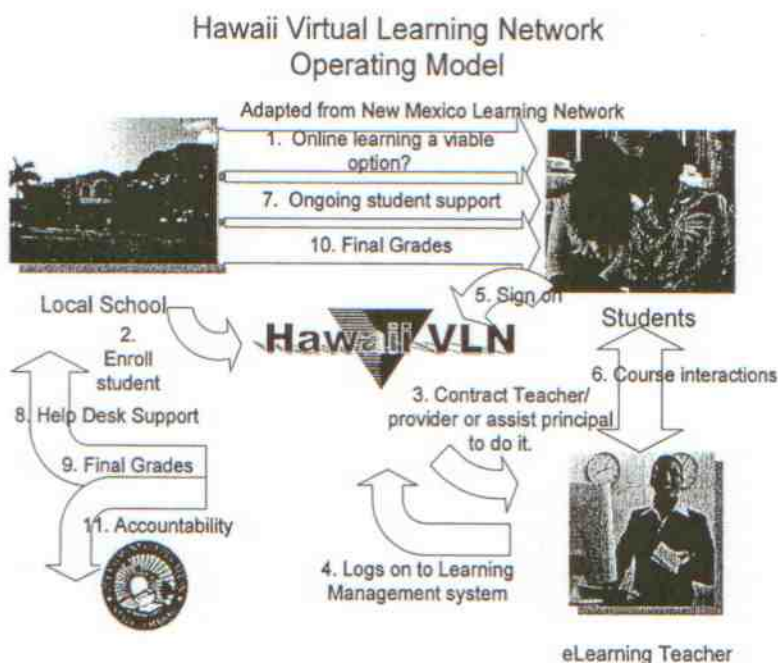


Figure 2.

*Administrative Process*

3. Establish a task force to review education policies, requirements, and oversight functions of the state to provide congruency and alignment with the needs and potential presented by online learning.
  - a) Identify the barriers of policies and procedures established for in-classroom teaching that impact online learning benefits.
  - b) Use online learning to increase on-time (or earlier) graduation rates, increase student achievement, decrease student retention, decrease student misconduct referrals, and better prepare students for the workforce.
  - c) Alter policies and procedures to maximize the benefits derived from online learning.



4. Parents/students will have access to any academically appropriate online curriculum or course.
  - a) Parents and high school students need flexibility to play a significant role in the selection of a course for high school level work.
  - b) Online learning has the potential to expand the options available to Hawaii parents for a successful and affordable high school experience for their child.
5. Focus should initially be on DOE and Charter high schools. The infrastructure should be designed for eventual expansion to:
  - a) DOE's middle and elementary schools.
  - b) DOE Adult Community Schools.
  - c) Charter Middle and Elementary schools.
  - d) The UH System, particularly UH Community Colleges.
  - e) Private secondary and post-secondary institutions for a fee.
  - f) Adult populations for remedial education and upgrading of workforce skill.

*Online Teacher Training*

6. DOE should develop and/or collaborate with the UH- Manoa Department of Educational Technology to establish a mentoring and training program for online teachers.
  - a) Create an online teacher endorsement program providing Professional Development (PD) credits as incentive. National certifications for online teaching will also be considered.
  - b) Designation of learning management system, content sources (purchased, developed, or leased), computer skill benchmarks, synchronous tools availability, assessment types and systems, and facilitation skills needed should precede establishing curriculum and delivery plans.
  - c) Timeline for the training experience and expertise should be developed.
7. DOE should develop and/or collaborate with the UH College of Education to establish a program to increase the number of highly qualified teachers, administrators and paraprofessionals through online teacher training.

*Criteria for Credit*

8. Credit will be given based on proficiency of "standards based" benchmarks including Hawaii's Content and Performance Standards.
  - a) Online courses with the same objectives and proficiency goals will be considered equivalent.
  - b) A pre-determined list of courses will be available for credit.
  - c) Principals are asked to determine credit where the above is in question.

