Transcript of Webinar

Distance/Hybrid Learning

0:06

Good morning, and thank you so much for joining us.

0:11

We're very excited to continue this webinar series.

0:16

Today, we'll have representatives from Newsela talk to us about distance learning and some of the options that we can do, both with distance and hybrid learning situations.

0:28

I did want to give us some updates, before they start. Very quickly, we've wrapped up GEER, the Governor's Emergency Education Recovery.

0:44

We're fortunate to have 63 districts participate, plus we had two of our charter LEAs.

0:53

We had over 40,000 students receive additional instruction and intervention through this program.

1:04

And 2,764 teachers provided those services over that break to make sure that we weren't having a slide due to Covid.

1:17

So, that process, we're going over the data now. Thank you so much for sharing the pre and post-test data.

1:25

I think for many people, it went well. We heard several reports of how, even where the attendance wasn't quite where people wanted it at the beginning, because of pandemic concerns, that the learning that was happening was, was fantastic and they were able to do a lot of dep intervention work.

1:50

I do want to welcome aboard our state regional literacy directors.

1:56

We have 21 of these literacy directors throughout the state.

2:02

They're being paid for or funded through the Cares Act. So we're very fortunate to have that.

2:10

Right now, we have 16 regions throughout the state where they're providing services both universal.

2:17

They'll be helping us with our implementation of the standards.

2:25

They'll be helping with our K-2 literacy initiatives. They'll also be providing targeted support based on the specific districts within the region.

2:36

Regarding the implementation next year, we're doing the K-2.

2:43

And for 6-12 we’re focusing on those electives.

2:48

So while secondary or 3 through 12, will start the year after next, we are starting with those electives.

2:58

And those are all those ELA based electives, including intensive reading.

3:02

We think it's very important to get those students who are reading significantly below grade level exposure to the secondary foundations so that they can start some of that targeted work in closing the gap and their understanding of the reading process.

3:20

We have started our meetings with districts.

3:24

So right now, our directors are beginning the process of working within those districts and they'll start working within the schools.

3:32

They'll be focusing on their targeted work with the school literacy leadership teams, which again is one of those mandates under our K 12 plan.

3:44

So we look forward to the great work that they'll be doing with that. As soon as all of them are officially on boarded we will be including that information on our webpage. So, you can see the contact information, and who's where. Right now, we are doing those meetings with districts, and doing introductions to make sure that the targeted support goes where it's needed.

4:09

Celebrate Literacy Week, January 25th through the 29th. Our theme is, Humanity tells a Story, What's Your Chapter? We'll be able to send more information on that soon.

4:22

So, keep an eye out for that.

4:25

We are currently working on guidance, and I've received a lot of questions about third grade portfolio. Particularly questions about security and distance or hybrid learning's situations.

4:38

That should be coming shortly. We just have to put the finishing touches on that.

4:46

Some of the feedback that we had received in the past, was that it would be nice, so very pleasant, if we had more time for questions. And I know last time we ran right up to and then just past the time that we had allotted.

5:04

So I did want to take this opportunity to open up for questions, so that we can make sure that, if you have questions, they're being answered.

5:18

If you do have questions, if you would, type them into the chat box, and we can answer those.

5:27

Yes, the theme for Literacy Week is Humanity tells this Story, What's your chapter?

5:38

The Regional Directors are people that we selected t throughout the state. When they applied, we had certain requirements. You can find those requirements on our website under the Cares Act portion on the Just Read, Florida! website.

5:54

They all had to have a reading endorsement and they had to have an ELA background, and we had certain certifications that show whether or not they had the ELA background.

6:04

Um, we're so pleased with those that we were able to include. And as they're made official, as their paperwork is completed, we're doing introductions directly with the districts that they'll be working with, and we will be putting their information on board. Many of them have a coaching background. Many of them have worked as either a specialist or teachers on special assignment. District literacy coaches. We had some coming from the classroom, many of them with years of experience.

6:40

They did have to have an understanding of the science of reading, and they are the ones who will be rolling out the standards implementation of the best standards.

6:53

They'll be helping us with some of that training. They're currently helping us work with the implementation guide. Every district will be supported in some way by these directors.

7:05

We have two who are not yet fully on board, and, as they are, they'll be introduced to their districts.

7:14

But, yes, every district is going to have some support from these regional directors.

7:21

We do not have an update on the reading endorsement extension beyond the December 31st deadline, although I have been told that an update is imminent.

7:33

And we will share that information with our districts and our contacts as soon as we have it.

7:51

Ah, OK.

7:54

There is a question. Is there any chance elective reading classes will become a requirement, again?

7:58

Each year, there are more and more parents who are not facing their student intensive reading, and they are aware of that intensive reading is not required by the state.

8:12

Um, there are a few things with that.

8:15

There's not a plan currently to go back to the rule that was repealed, in 2015.

8:24

However, where there's a mandate that students receive services and those interventions require that you have a teacher who's reading endorsed or reading certified, to get those services are going to have to put them in that class to get those services. We are working on guidance with that.

8:51

When the statute changed, and the rule changed, I think that that sort of change should change the way the things were typically done.

9:03

I know that some districts are still using some of the requirements from the 2015 rule, from the rule that was repealed in 2015. We have sent guidance out and included that in our training for counselors.

9:20

And I think that that's something that we can also send out as we're doing the implementation work. Specifically when we're talking about how that is reflected by the data element. There will be communication coming to the districts regarding Celebrate Literacy Week.

9:45

They're in the process of getting the branding packet together and when we have that, we will definitely share that.

9:54

Oh, that is such a good question. When will the B.E.S.T. implementation guide be ready?

10:01

Soon, I hope. We are working feverishly on this.

10:06

And our goal is to have it in the spring of this coming up year. We have so many great pieces and parts.

10:15

And now, we're doing the, the sort of editing of which ones are truly going to be user friendly for teachers. Which ones add to the standard, and to understanding, and which ones might be better used either in PD later. So, that is one thing that our state regional literacy directors are working on with us.

10:42

And I know that it feels like a long wait. But when it gets here, I can assure you it will be worthwhile.

10:50

Much like the previous implementation guide we did, it will be very computer friendly as well. Like you can print the hard copy, but everything will also be hyperlinked to sort of make that ease of use for teachers as they need to.

11:23

I have a question. Do I have any additional information about the free progress monitoring that was offered to districts earlier this year?

11:32

I know it's in the process and that media report, was sent out, I believe, yesterday, regarding it.

11:40

But that those districts who are going to sign up have done so.

11:45

I can see about getting information specifically. And the next time we send out one of our updates, I can include it there as well.

11:54

But I think that they have sent some of that information out.

11:59

Like, within the past two days.

12:11

Yes, we will have a list of the names and the regions, we have two more that we have to have official.

12:18

And then what we've prepared is we have a map, and a chart with the regions, the districts represented by those regions, and the state regional literacy directors that serve that area.

12:33

And we also have their, bios and pics, so that as they come by, you'll know exactly who they are.

12:49

OK.

12:52

Reading courses that have been eliminated for next school year, will they be replaced with another non intensive reading course for secondary school? Yes.

13:03

We do have some of the courses were canceled or eliminated.

13:09

Some were changed, um, but what we've done is we've created courses or repurposed courses to act as scaffolds.

13:21

So, in ninth grade, if I'm taking my English one, and I'm taking reading, as well, instead of taking just reading, I would take world literature which scaffolds the standards within ninth grade.

13:38

And get students in a position where they can, um, get that background knowledge and background information on the work that they're doing in their ELA course. We've also threw out 6 to 8.

13:53

And in high school, there are some, in high school, ready, but we've expanded speech in debate. So, there's other courses that require reading, response to reading, writing grating and argument. Those sorts of classes are very ELA intensive.

14:09

We have those.

14:11

What we've tried to do is, to pin point those courses that had a clear purpose and would provide students with the background information that they needed to be successful, would provide them with skills and practice and application of the reading that they were doing.

14:36

We will be doing a training on the course changes, because we've also had course changes within the offerings at elementary.

14:46

Where we've taken that one sort of catch all instance, of course, which was, I think it was, functional, basic skills and reading. And we've sort of broken that into four. So you can address tier two and tier three interventions. K-2 and 3-5 instead of having them altogether in a K-5 course.

15:28

The question is, is there anywhere we can see these course changes in writing before the training? Um, certainly within CPalms within the course code section, with the course descriptions, you can see the changes have been made.

15:46

Um, beyond that, I think we have a list. But I don't know that that list would be as informative as a training. I think that we could probably do an overview for it, but there's so much explanation that goes into what the courses are and what they represent instead of our lovely lists with these arrows that sort of point to what the intent is.

16:17

Yes, those are elementary course codes for 2021, 2022, and they're in CPalms. You can find them.

16:30

I believe they're under, either reading or ELA and then Reading and then I think it's remedial.

16:47

Dorothea, if you could explain your question, just a little more for me, I want to make sure that I'm reading it correctly.

17:06

Yes.

17:07

Lorie, there will still be English Honors for advanced courses and there are still some of those honors literature courses. And I believe they've expanded some of the writing based courses, as well.

17:45

OK?

18:11

OK, I see a question.

18:14

It's about the out of field for reading option. Not having that, the principals are finding it difficult to find teachers willing to take on the reading endorsement requirements.

18:34

I know that where the requirement is that anyone who's providing tier three interventions, have the endorsement or the certification. And unless scheduling has been done to make that, not, where every teacher, who is providing reading instruction is going to have that.

19:02

I understand that it may be difficult.

19:04

But at the same time we need teachers who have that background to give that targeted instruction.

19:12

I do, I sympathize and Debbie, I would love to get with you if you'll contact me separately after this. I think that I would like to put our heads together to see where we can go on that.

19:40

Oh, go you, yes.

19:44

Dorothea, thank you so much for the clarification.

19:48

Within, um, within statute, there's a requirement, and it's actually, within the Just Read, Florida! statute, that background knowledge be built by using the content from other disciplines as reading content for reading instruction.

20:08

So that we're purposeful in what we're selecting.

20:12

And as we have students reading, we're also exposing them to some of the tenants of the other disciplines. So that's a requirement certainly for K through five.

20:26

But it's also one that occurs throughout within our best ELA standards.

20:34

We also within our B.E.S.T. ELA standards, we have included a civics booklist as well. And part of that is because of the mandates within statute about providing civics instruction.

20:53

And it be included in a lot of the reading material. So that’s already a requirement.

21:02

And what we're trying to do is we're trying to sort of make that more of a natural, available option as we go through. That's something that we're certainly trying to support, both with our book list and with some of the things that we're doing in terms of training and helping with instruction.

21:32

You're quite welcome.

21:40

OK, I think.

21:45

I hope I'm scrolling appropriately, but I think I have gotten all of our questions.

21:52

And we may have time at the end, as well, but I want to make sure that I give our presenters time.

21:58

So thank you so much for this as you have questions, if there are any, I find that I haven't gone through, I will certainly send the answer.

22:08

But I would very much like to introduce Whitney O'Connell, and Mark Alsdorf from Newsela.

22:23

Thank you, Rebecca. Really happy to be here today, and really appreciate our partnership with Just Read Florida. And thank you to everybody else, who's joined this presentation this morning. And also a big thank you to those who filled out our survey preemptively. It really helped guide our presentation today. My name is Mark Alsdorf, like Rebecca mentioned, and I head up district partnerships here in Florida.

22:49

And, you know, at this at this time, I'd like to turn things over to Whitney O'Connell. She's our Senior Solutions Architect here in the state who's going to be leading the presentation.

23:02

Hi, everybody.

23:03

Mark, can you hear me?

23:06

OK, great. And you can see my screen.

23:10

OK, we're really glad to be here with you all today and talk about driving student engagement with best aligned literacy content. Like Mark mentioned, we're really thankful that you all filled out the survey, so that we could better understand how to best serve you in our time together today. I do want to note that we will be using a tool called Slido. And this tool can be accessed through your cell phone by taking a QR Code later, or by opening up another tab on your computer. And going to slido dot com.

23:41

These instructions will show up again when you need them. I just wanted to, to preface that we will be using another tool, so just be ready for that.

23:48

Like Mark mentioned, my name is Whitney O'Connell. And I am a Solution Architect here at Newsela. I'm a former teacher. I taught K two, so I really was invested in literacy and learning to read, but also deeply invested in student motivation. And have had some really phenomenal opportunities to write curriculum as well. And so I really wanted to work with you all today to talk about four different things.

24:14

First, we want to talk about what makes something viral, what makes something really interesting to students, and to us as adults. Then we want to talk about what motivates us. So first, engagement, then motivation. And then number three, how can we use standards to avoid curricular chaos. And then finally, how can we tie all these things together with a nice bow and engage all learners in every classroom?

24:39

So this is where, we are trying out this tool slido, so you'll notice in the top left-hand corner of the screen, there is a QR Code. If you have a cell phone on you, what you'll do is you'll just open up your camera and scan that code and you'll be brought to this poll. Or you can go to slido dot com and enter this code here, X 0 3 7. Once you get there, you'll be asked this question: What causes a lack of student engagement? And you'll be able to enter in your response. And you can enter more than one response if you have multiple things. Don't feel like you need to throw them all in one answer. You can definitely answer more than one way.

25:15

So I'll give us some time. Perfect. Yep. People are getting in. Boring content.

25:22

Hmm, hmm, hmm, hmm.

25:43

I see some interesting answers coming in. It seems like a lot of us have similar feelings about what causes a lack of student engagement.

25:52

Lack of connection, dealing. Yeah, it seems like a lot of folks are mentioning like the level of content and making sure it's actually accessible for kids.

26:01

Just the interest. Yeah, distracted by life events, that's a really important one to consider.

26:07

Work is too easy or too hard.

26:11

Thinking they're not good readers. Oh, that's such a real one, and that's one that we will talk about today. We want to combat that.

26:20

Lack of challenge.

26:26

I'll give us about 30 more seconds to get our answers in.

26:35

Relationship with teacher is such an important one. I'm glad that somebody mentioned that.

26:48

Worksheets are busywork.

26:56

All right.

26:58

Awesome. So, you know, scrolling through these, it seems like, content that's not related to their personal life, content that is either too easy or too hard, distractions at home. Not feeling valued.

27:16

So if I were to bucket these, based on what y'all mentioned, I do think it'd be like personal connection to the content, um, content that's accessible, so, can they read it? Is it too easy or too hard?

27:29

Um, does it excite?

27:33

I think that's a really important one.

27:35

Um.

27:39

Yeah, great. Thank you so much for, for sharing and participating in that.

27:45

So I think that we're all kind of centered in the same ideas. Let's take a look at what research says, causes a lack of engagement, and I think that you'll, you'll see that it's a lot of what you already know.

27:57

So, I actually want to talk about engagement by talking about this Golden Retriever dog.

28:05

I don't know if y'all remember this, it feels like forever ago, but in February, when the Westminster Dog Show happened, and this became really big news. And it truly went viral, went viral on Twitter and it was talked about all over all different media outlets. What happened was this, this Golden Retriever, a Golden Retriever has never won the Westminster Dog Show. And this Golden Retriever Daniel was kind of slated to maybe win. And he did not. And so to do hashtags, one viral about as Daniel was robbed and justice for Daniel and I want to show you a clip from a nightly news show that talked about this in a way that I've honestly never seen a nightly news show talk about really anything but with such passion. So let's take a look at that.

28:58

The snubbing of Daniel the Golden Retriever at the Westminster Dog Show.

29:03

Which we report without comment was won by Siba, the standard poodle. Now, to Daniel.

29:10

Daniel won his sporting category, look at those looks, at Madison Square Garden. The arena was electric when a golden retriever finally made it into the final round.

29:21

But, no, I guess Daniel wasn't cute enough with his first place sporting class ribbon.

29:28

I can it wasn’t cute enough when Daniel hugged his handler, I guess not. Well, enjoy first place Siba, but those footsteps you hear belong to a Golden Retriever.

29:42

So, that is the kind of passion and engagement that I believe we should be driving towards in the classroom.

29:51

So let's take a look, a little bit more about this, Daniel, viral content. So like I mentioned, this one really viral on Twitter. There are thousands and thousands of tweets about this. I've selected a few of my favorites.

30:05

And it was organizations tweeted about Daniel, individuals' tweeted about ..., you know, everyone was in on the game.

30:22

People who clearly had never been interested in the Westminster Dog Show became interested.

30:29

And this is my personal favorite.

30:38

So, not only did people have really strong, positive feelings towards Daniel, but people started having very strong negative feelings towards Siba. And, again, I think, like, those kind of emotions are what we want to ignite in students in the classroom. We want them to feel so excited and exhilarated by content that they want to tweet about it. You know, we want this content to be that exciting for them.

31:02

So, why do things go viral? What's the psychology behind this? We all know that things do go viral. If you have children yourself, or even yourself, you'll, you'll notice that when things go viral on all these social media platforms, news media started talking about it as well. Well, according to psychological theory, there are two main components to this. And I want to preface by saying any research I mention today, I will be sending out at the end. So if you want to dive into the research yourself, you're welcome to.

31:31

So, according to psychological theory, content that feels novel is something that our brain responds really positively to.

31:40

We actually release dopamine when we have something novel. And then the other one is this, which aligns to this information gap theory.

31:50

So what this states is that if we get a taste of information, but we don't have all the information we need, this really drives curiosity. So George Loewenstein says that curiosity is the gap between what we know and what we want to know. And these are the two components of something that really makes people light up about content.

32:11

So how do we recreate that type of energy in a classroom, though? We know that we know that kids are excited, and they're looking at TikTok and Twitter, but like we want them to feel that same energy and excitement in classrooms.

32:23

Particularly in relation to reading.

32:25

So my next question for you all is, what is something that you are deeply curious about?

32:31

If we think about something that, you know, ignites that curiosity and you know, what is something that you're curious about? It could be related to anything. And we'll be talking a little bit more about this.

33:23

I don't know if you all have this experience, but I find that when I, when I become deeply curious about something, I definitely fall into the trap of, like going down the rabbit hole of information. And again, that's something that we want to foster in kids, like we get that experience all the time as adults.

33:39

Perhaps you're deeply interested in sporting dogs, right, and then you go down this rabbit hole and you just keep reading and reading and reading, and you become a mini expert on that topic. That's, that's what we want for kids, too.

33:57

OK, so, let's take one of these examples.

34:00

Um, pick kind of a, the peloton not delivered, I wish I could answer that one for you, but unfortunately I don't have that information.

34:14

Let's take a look at I think I saw someone mention horses, let's just do horses.

34:27

And I'm picking this example because it's not something that I am deeply curious about, but I think that we can become deeply curious about anything if we're given the right information.

34:36

So, what I'm going to show you really quickly is an experience that a student learner can have in the Newsela platform. I do want to say that this experience is something that can be done in other places, like the Library of Congress, for certain types of content.

34:49

The main thing I want to get across is that we want to give students spaces and opportunities to be deeply curious but in in, with vetted content. I know that as a teacher, I did teach younger students, but I did a lot of work with older students as well. And my biggest fear was if I was in a computer lab with kids, and they opened up Google, and started just searching for things. Because you just never know what's going to pop up.

35:13

And so creating an environment, or having a library of resources that you trust is super important in being able to do this kind of work with kids.

35:22

So if I go into the Newsela platform, and, again, you can do this in other places, but make sure it's vetted, and I search for courses.

35:30

Let's see what pops up. Let's see if there's anything interesting here.

35:34

And again, I'm going to say, I'm not somebody who is deeply curious about horses. So I'm going to find one that would really strike this interest for me.

35:41

I see some fiction pieces. We have black beauty here.

35:49

OK, I'm interested in this one.

35:52

That's somebody born into slavery who won the Kentucky Derby. I'm interested in zebras. Let's see how they connect to horses.

36:05

And I've actually seen this story, the kindergarten class did a unicorn party for a classmate. So I just want to read that one.

36:10

So, you can imagine, this is kind of an endless search experience, but you want to give students this space where they can just, you know, light a fire under them to search for content that's exciting.

36:24

We did a little dive on horses here.

36:28

Life after death, I'm deeply interested in that too.

36:31

Um, OK.

36:33

So, we've talked a little bit about what it means to feel curious and what science says about curiosity and like how to make viral content.

36:43

Um, and we talked a little bit about what it means to have that exist in the classroom. But next, I want to talk about what research says about motivation. I think that engagement and motivation are deeply tied.

36:54

And I want us to think, first and foremost, about how to make this come to life in a distance learning environment. We know that, you know, folks are back in the classroom or will be back in the classroom, but I think being prepared for anything is really important, too.

37:08

So let's just talk, and I know that it's been challenging in distance learning environments.

37:13

So let's talk a little bit about this. I'm leaning on another piece of research here for what motivates students. So like I mentioned, I will be sending that out later.

37:21

So there are four key components to motivation according to this research, and this came out from ASCD.

37:28

It's actually an older piece but I thought was really interesting. The four components to it are success, curiosity, originality and relationships. And we're going to talk about each of those components individually. So, let's first talk about success. Success in a classroom is that students have the opportunity and the need to feel like they can master something. Right?

37:48

Now, we would say growth mindset. So, how do we make this happen and come to life for kids? And a couple of things. So the first thing that we need is we need to articulate success criteria, but then also give immediate and constructive feedback. Give students opportunities to do better.

38:09

We need students to see, this is where the growth mindset comes, and we need them to see that they can grow and change, and that they're dynamic individuals. And then, we also need them to see that success is a part of who they are. And that they may be deeply successful on one content area or in sports, or, and maybe they're a great artist, and we need them to see that as a, as a facet of who they are.

38:34

So, in terms of quick and constructive feedback, let's talk a little bit about that and how that give students that successful feeling. So here's an example. Newsela has four question quizzes at the end of every piece of content. And after a student takes a quiz, you see that I'm currently taking this quiz fast, they will receive immediate feedback about which questions were correct and which were incorrect. And then they can go through and review their responses. They can't necessarily change them. But being able to see what was the reasoning and why they got something wrong is a really great way for students to feel like they can grow and change over time.

39:15

The next thing, so we talked a little bit about feedback. Let's, let's dive into that a little bit more here.

39:22

So, we also believe that students should be able to revise and iterate on their work. And this really aligns well with the iterative nature of the best standards as they drive towards mastery, right? We know that students, they grow, and they are constantly working in a progression towards mastery of a standard. So this is a great example of that. The student has submitted a right prompt response to a text about McDonald's. And the question was to choose a specific detail sentence or paragraph in the text and explain how it supports the main idea.

39:55

So what did the student do well? They, they did choose a sentence. And then, but then they just wrote one sentence, and they really just repeated the write prompt.

40:03

And so as a teacher, that's probably not enough, like we want them to do more.

40:08

But giving them feedback, and then an opportunity to revise, scrap their answer completely if needed or modify it based on your feedback, without feeling penalized with a score, is a great opportunity for students to feel success in the classroom.

40:25

So the student responded and then the teacher has given a short response back and the student will see that feedback and then can edit and resubmit their response.

40:36

OK, next, what motivate students? How do we motivate them now?

40:42

This one really digs into curiosity. So how can we arouse curiosity? We talked about this a little bit before with thinking about viral content. And so this aligns very well with that.

40:52

According to this research, there are two components to what arouses curiosity. The first one is a personal connection to the content. You all mentioned this into why students are disconnected, that it doesn't feel relevant. And so I pulled up two articles that are of interest to me and I'll explain why.

41:08

I'm from Minnesota, and I actually haven't lived there for quite a long time now. And I still, now, anytime I see something pop up about Minnesota, I'm curious about it, like, what's going on there, you know? I want to find out what's happening in that part of the world. And that's because of my personal connection to Minnesota.

41:25

And so we want to give students opportunities.

41:28

This is a really high level kind of fluffy example, but we want students to feel like they see themselves in the content they read. In their identity and who they are and their community, and how they live and exist in the world, and so on.

41:42

And that can drive curiosity, which is really where we want to land.

41:47

The other part of curiosity and I think this is really interesting is giving fragmentary information or contradictory information. So we want students to be exposed to content that makes them wonder, right. And so, I saw this the other day, I saw this article said, cows kill more people than sharks. And my initial response was, I like the fod.

42:09

I thought there is no possible way that cows kill more people than sharks, and I must know more. I need to know if this is true. I need to fact check this. I need to dive into what is going on with cows, right?

42:27

And that's great. Like, that's where we want students to be. So we can imagine there are a ton of great opportunities to do this in a distance learning environment. This is certainly not limited to an in person environment, particularly because we have the Internet where we can find anything we need.

42:45

The next one is originality, which is the need for self-expression. I'm going to talk about this a little bit more later. This activity, which can be done really easily in a virtual environment, but I thought was really fun. I attended a professional development recently where the, the person, who was giving the professional development asked everyone to take five minutes to find something that represented a part of their identity.

43:13

And it could be anything, it was super open-ended.

43:16

And so, I did a little bit of thinking, and a core part of who I am, is that growing up, my family played board games.

43:25

That was something that I think was really unique about my family. It's still a constant now. It's something that we all love to do. We'll play pretty much any board game. We can play them for hours. There's no limit. All of my sisters’ spouses now joke about how it's like too much.

43:40

But it's really a part of who I am and it's really shaped who I am.

43:43

And, and so showing someone an article or a set of articles or an image that represents identity in a Zoom environment tends to be really easy and a great way to foster a sense of self-expression while building relationships.

44:03

And then this last one here ties in really well. So the need for involvement with others.

44:08

And I'm going to send out a link for this as well. But this I really liked this article that I was reading that had eight strategies for our Synchronous or Asynchronous around how to help students build relationships and virtual environments. The first one in the synchronous strategies that I want to highlight is this twist on show and tell, which is essentially what I just explained to you. And so what this teacher did is, rather than an article, they had them find a photo, painting or drawing that represented they're like inter-generational family.

44:40

And then all students would do, kind of, a written response. Asking questions to dive deeper into understanding that student. Things like, responding to questions like, what are we looking at? What makes you say that? What do you notice? What more can we uncover about this person? And so giving students really authentic experiences to represent themselves, but also understand their peers.

45:05

Then in terms of asynchronous activities, and the one I want to highlight here is seeing and critiquing peer work through virtual gallery walks. Students can still present projects. They can still these speeches. They can do all these things because we're fortunate that we can engage with each other through digital platforms. And so, how do we take that one step further, where we can use tools like Google Sheets and Google forums, and allow students to provide feedback to their peers?

45:33

Things like, what's something that you learned from your peer? What's something that surprised you about this topic? What's something you liked about their presentation? I remember doing this in person environments, in classrooms. And I think it's really important for us to motivate teachers to continue using those best practices and just adapt them to that virtual environment. Which I'm sure a lot of the educators in your life are already doing, but really empower them that, that, that is the right thing to do.

46:00

OK, so we've talked about what drives engagement. How can we motivate? And now let's think about taking those two pieces, but not creating chaos, right? We want, we still want classrooms to be somewhat structured environment for kids and for teachers, and we know that doesn't always mean we can just, like, let kids lose completely.

46:20

And, we do need some sort of structure in terms of what are we learning, and what are we driving towards.

46:26

So, Florida has the new B.E.S.T. standards, right? And what I want to highlight here, this is actually some research from Marzano. And, and this is his phrasing. So he, he was stating that he thinks standards help avoid curricular chaos.

46:42

But it doesn't really stop there. We really need to equip teachers with the resources that help them work against the standards. The standards alone are fantastic, but, if teachers don't have anything that supports those standards, then they probably can't execute against them very well, and they can't do that standards based instruction, that the State of Florida really wants, right?

47:02

And so, this is some data from NAEP, from eighth graders in Florida, from 92 to 2019.

47:09

I think it's pretty interesting, because I know that we're always working towards growth. But, across the country, actually 31 states had lower eighth grade reading scores in 20 19 than in 20 17. And I think there's certainly a lot of reasons why, right?

47:26

But I think one possible reason is that we have more, and more, and more and more access to resources, for educators, for districts, for students, and we don't always know how they connect to those standards. And we've kind of created this world of chaos for ourselves, in the classroom. Because we have all these great things, we can, we can look at all these different resources online that are free, or I can pay five bucks for something that someone's created. But I kind of have a chaotic environment, and I don't know how I'm actually driving towards mastery of those standards.

48:02

So, so what I really believe that, in order to avoid that curricular chaos, is, we need to have this content. These activities, that ignite curiosity, that engage students, that really excite them. But in order to truly avoid the chaos, we need students to, we need to know what students need to learn.

48:23

We need to know what teachers need to teach. And we need to know where instruction must improve.

48:28

And so, in any resource that you're adopting in any resource you're looking for, especially in a distance environment, you need your teachers to be able to find the standards in many different facets of the resource. It shouldn't just be at the beginning unit guide. They should be able to find, how does this small activity aligned to standards? How does this quiz align to standards? How does this article align to standards?

48:50

And so, finding meaningful ways for teachers to see that, come those standards come to life in their instruction is very important.

49:00

And finally, bringing this all together, um, we know that engagement is important.

49:08

We know motivation is important, and we know standards based instruction is important. But we can only engage all students if all students can engage.

49:16

And what do I mean by that? We know that there's been an achievement or an opportunity gap across the country for years. You know, by many different subgroup populations, we can identify, you know, in our specific district or in a specific school, or even in our specific classroom.

49:33

I know that when I was teaching I was segregating my data and I and I noticed that my boys we're really struggling in one content area in a way that none of my female students were.

49:47

And so we know that it's important to make sure that all of our students have equity and access to the resources in order to be engaged, be motivated, and really drive towards those goals we're all working towards.

50:01

So let's talk about a few things that you should really expect in any resource that you are using and a distance learning environment in particular, but in any time.

50:11

So this first piece, and I'll send out, I'll send out resources around this, is actually called the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. These are internationally respected guidelines around accessibility.

50:25

It's accessibility in a lot of different ways. Companies will apply it for this as well. But what does it mean for classrooms?

50:31

It means that students who have accessibility issues shouldn't be blocked by the resource if they wouldn't be blocked in the classroom, right? So a couple of things that that is expected. Students should be able to fully navigate websites using a keyboard.

50:47

Students need to make, or we need to make sure that all websites have updated colors, so that students who may be colorblind or have low vision aren’t blocked from understanding the content.

50:58

There needs to be alternative text on every image for low vision students.

51:01

The websites themselves need to be not super stimulating so that they're not overwhelming for learners.

51:11

And then, there also needs to be assistive technology, or the ability to integrate assistive technology, like screen readers.

51:18

So, let me show you a few examples of what those look like when they come to life.

51:21

And so, this would be that alternative text, right? So, every image that you see in any research should have alternative text for students. That should be a no-brainer to make sure that any student who perhaps can't engage with the visual image, can engage with the text.

51:37

And also, it means that if a student has low vision, this can be read by a screen reader.

51:42

So they can understand what's in the picture.

51:47

What else?

51:49

Adaptive leveling. So a lot of you mentioned at the beginning, what stop students from being engaged and a lot of you mentioned, the content is too easy or too hard. It's kind of like the Goldilocks scenario, right? Like, the chair is too big or too small, we just can't find the right one.

52:05

And we want to eliminate that lift for teachers and for students. And so, content should be presented to students in a way that is accessible for them.

52:15

What that means in Newsela is that, when a student logs in, and finds content organically, or if a teacher assigns a piece of content, there will be first presented with that content at their reading level.

52:26

There are other resources that do this, but you should certainly expect that any resource you use, particularly in literacy environment, does that, because we can't, especially in distance learning, it's so hard for teachers to differentiate. We know, that's been a huge blocker for teachers and it's hard in, in, in person environment, too. And so we need to take that off their shoulders, and we need it to be done for them.

52:50

But the leveling shouldn't just stop at the content, this is an example of what this looks like.

52:54

The top article, this is the same article, and this is about Deaf U. A couple of things that change when text should be leveled.

53:04

There's a ton that goes into text complexity, length, word choice, sentence length, sometimes headers, a lot of different components. And so, you need to make sure that it's truly accessible, but that the meaning of the text is not lost.

53:23

Um, you should also be exposing students and you should expect that your resources expose students to tier two academic language. So, we know that tier one language is language you use every single day. That tier three language is language that is very content or subject specific. The tier two is, really what's can be the biggest blocker for kids. More challenging, not subject specific. And so we need to be giving them opportunities to practice that in context. And that should be also presented at their reading level.

53:54

Because challenging language for a ninth grader who's reading at 12th grade level versus a ninth grader reading at a third grade level will look very different and they should be presented with the content that supports that.

54:07

Quizzes should also be leveled. We can’t expect that students can take a quiz not at their Lexile level. I'm sure we've all seen this in standardized testing, that if the question is written in a way that they can't understand, they can always represent what they know. And so, not only should they be leveled, but they should be leveled in a manner that allows them to practice the same skill as their grade level here. So, in this example for, for this article, that's about McDonald's the students are being assessed on central idea. On the left you see the article, which is at a seventh grade level.

54:45

It's aligned to the standard that states compare two or more central ideas and their development through a text.

54:52

The exact same quiz question on the same article at a student who's reading at a third grade level would be identifying the central idea and explain how relevant details support that idea a text. So it's that vertically aligned standard, and that's what you should expect.

55:08

This goes back to that WCAG compliance. So content should either have read aloud functionality built in. And this aligns really well with modifications that are put into IEPs, but also there are integrations that allow for a screen reader.

55:24

So if you use a different screen reader in your district, you need to make sure that any platform you're using, it can work with a screen reader. And this is an example of what the experience can look like.

55:38

Nyle DiMarco is ready to show you reality at Deaf U. By Forbes, adapted by Newsela staff.

55:44

Published November 10, 2020. Most people know what Nyle DiMarco looks like. He is an actor and model. He appeared on the TV show “Dancing With The Stars.” His newest project is called “Deaf U.”

55:56

It gives an in-depth look at deaf culture. The reality show….

56:02

So not only should it screen read for them, but they should be able to see the words as they're being read.

56:10

Really, really phenomenal tool and resource for students who are English language learners, multilingual students who maybe are reading a little bit below grade level, but want to access the content at grade level. There's a lot of use cases for this. That is why you should expect this in a resource.

56:34

Annotations. A lot of tools will do this, too. But, again, like I mentioned earlier, we don't want to stop teachers from using best practices, research based instructional activities that they've always done in the classroom if they're having to teach in a virtual environment or socially distance environment. And so having a tool, that allows you, to annotate like you, would, in a physical text, is really important.

56:59

In Newsela specifically, we only allow the annotation tool to be used, teacher to student or a student to teacher.

57:06

We don't, facilitate this for student to student conversation, because we found that, that kind of conversation, without a teacher there can maybe facilitate cyberbullying.

57:18

But you should at minimum, expect that it should be able to be initiated by a teacher to a student or from a student to a teacher.

57:30

Further, any assessment, like I mentioned, quizzes should be accessible and equitable for kids. But things like write prep should be too. And so in this example, we have a write prompt associated with all 12,000 articles in our library, but they're all customizable.

57:47

And so I wanted to show examples of how you can scaffold or completely modify based on the needs of your individual learners. So on the left-hand side, kept the original write prompt and added a sentence stem. The right hand side scrapped the entire thing and simplified it.

58:03

And so, we want to make sure that, by taking the left off of teachers, in some regards, like automatically leveling text, they have more ability to engage with these really meaningful moments where they can scaffold and modify in a really particular way for the students in their classroom.

58:22

And then, finally, um, this is hard. I know, across the state of Florida, there are a lot of home languages.

58:29

So there, don't think that you'll necessarily always find a tool that has every home language for every student. That would be the ideal state, of course, but you can find some content that is in home language that can be really valuable for kids. In this example, I'm showing Spanish content and our platform. That's also available at five levels.

58:52

Our quizzes are then translated into Spanish and leveled as well and so are our write prompts. Like I mentioned, not every resource will be available in every home language, but something else you can consider is, like, how can your district integrate tools like Google Read and Write and other resources that can ensure that students who need access to home language resources happen?

59:16

This is an example of Read Aloud in Spanish too.

59:18

I think that and this is actually one of the neatest components, because I know that many of my students that I taught were Spanish speakers, and their parents were Spanish speakers.

59:28

And for their parents, being able to hear the content were reading in Spanish would have been very valuable.

1:00:01

So that is all we have for you all today. I really appreciate the time to talk with you all about how we can drive more engagement using standards based instruction to ensure that students are really motivated to keep learning and excited in classrooms across the state of Florida.

1:00:22

I did mentioned that I would send out a resource that has all the resources we talked about today and more information about Newsela if you're at all curious. So there is a website link you'll be getting.

1:00:32

Um, and I want to highlight specifically, one spot that you can find more information from, what we talked about today. So if you look across the top, there's Explore Resources, if you're interested in any of those. And then under Webinar Info, this is really what, where you'll get all those resources I mentioned earlier.

1:00:50

And so resources about Newsela specifically, but then more importantly, the research that I leaned on today for this talk.

1:00:58

So we'll be sending that out later. And I just want to thank you all so much. Like Mark mentioned at the beginning, my name is Whitney O'Connell, and my colleague, Mark Alsdorf.

1:01:07

We're really here to help anyone who needs it, or just talk and learn more about your curricular vision at your district. So, thank you so much, and I'll pass it back to, Just Read, Florida.

1:01:27

I want to thank Whitney and Mark so much for joining us today.

1:01:31

And for going through some of the things I know that we've all had questions about, specifically motivation and engagement, and where to find resources that are appropriate.

1:01:46

1:01:50

I also want to make sure, I think we have gone through a lot of the questions that people had today.

1:01:59

We will be continuing our webinar series and sending out more information on that as we get a chance.

1:02:06

I did want to give people who had additional questions, a chance to ask a few of those. And we can do that for the next few minutes, but then we will go and allow you to have that extra time in your day, because I know we all have so much to do.

1:02:24

If we did have any additional questions.

1:02:29

Oh, Kimberlee, I'm so glad.

1:02:32

We're currently working on revamping our webpage, where we will be putting recordings up.

1:02:39

We have a spot where it will go. They aren't up yet, but I will say that it is recorded, and we'll be trying to either send those out, either to those who register, or we'll send something out to those who've registered when it's available on our website.

1:03:14

OK, thank you so much for that.

1:03:16

And I'm going to direct you to our person who does the data element piece, and I'm, I think, that she'll be able to help you with that specific part.

1:03:34

OK, perfect.

1:03:36

And, Kim, I'll be sending that to you in just a moment.

1:03:41

If we have any other questions, I know that there was a question regarding the APM, the progress monitoring piece.

1:03:55

So I'm going to put the link to that in the chat, so everyone will be able to go to that webpage.

1:04:06

It's got the portal where it provides all of that information. Because Detra I know that she had specifically asked about that, and I want to make sure you all have that.

1:04:21

OK, any other questions?

1:04:29

Ann makes a good point that you might want to check with your assessment office as well.

1:04:36

You can always check with our Assessment Office through ARM, and you can find them on the fldoe.org website.

1:04:49

The pre K standards have already been aligned to the best standards, and that was, that happened, at roughly the same time. There is a crosswalk that compares, it’s the only crosswalk you'll hear about with the best standards. We're not providing a crosswalk, but this is a crosswalk from those pre K standards to the best standards so that you can see that alignment and that is available.

1:05:19

In fact, we can go ahead and put that on our webpage as well.

1:05:26

Perfect. Thank you, Debbie.

1:05:37

OK, and I did want to direct you as well, to the fldoe webpage.

1:05:52

Let’s see if it's going to let me.

1:06:00

Hopefully, you're seeing the, fldoe webpage.

1:06:05

And if you type in the search box, Distance Learning, it'll bring up best practices for distance learning, and you'll see an abundance of resources.

1:06:19

It goes specifically to some of the needs that you may be encountering.

1:06:26

Considerations for English language learners.

1:06:32

Cybersecurity Guidance.

1:06:35

And then, a list of other resources.

1:06:41

So check that out, as well.

1:06:50

And if there are no further questions, again, I want to thank you so much for, for attending these. We get such joy in presenting them to you. And we're so glad to be able to use this way in a time that I think benefits all of our students.

1:07:08

And we look forward to hearing from you, certainly through the questions for the next one. I'll stay on for another moment or two. But do have a lovely day.

1:07:19

And thank you so much for your time.

1:07:34

Oh, happy Thanksgiving to everyone as well.

1:07:43

The Oral language, one was, I think, very insightful one that I'd like to see us get back to as well.

1:07:52

I mean, there's so much to mine there.

1:07:56

Oh, I'm so glad, I'm so glad.

1:08:17

OK, if you have any further questions at all, you can always e-mail us through Just Read at fldoe.org or through our individual e-mails, which are on there under contact.

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