

The 411 on Distance Learning for Teachers and Students

Distance Learning is really about...

- Providing motivated learners with an ongoing self-study 'class' that they can access on their own schedule.
- Developing existing independent learning & digital literacy skills
- Preparing for post-secondary and workplace expectations
- Helping learners make faster progress

DL is NOT really about...

- Getting "more hours" (to meet MFIP requirements or during breaks)
- Extra homework
- CASAS or TABE practice
- Just something to do before a student's class start date

Who is a good candidate for DL?

- Has good class attendance, and studies outside of class too
- Has solid soft skills: (responsible, punctual, organized, tries independently, does homework, communicates when absent, makes progress, etc.)
- Has time (4+ hours a week, just like any other class)
- Has basic digital literacy skills*
- Has and uses email regularly*

*For those who don't yet have basic digital literacy skills or don't have regular internet access, we do offer DVDs and workpackets (for newer low-level ELLs), **but the other characteristics still apply.**

What DL programs do we offer?

- **Plato** (ELL 4-7, Math, GED, and College Prep)
The most comprehensive online site we use, offering all levels of Math, GED, Accuplacer prep, and ELL 4-7 instruction in reading and language/writing. <http://tinyurl.com/juityc9>
- **USA Learns** (ELL 2-6)
Video- and picture-based, interactive instruction for English language learning. <http://www.usalearns.org/learn-english-online>
- **Learner Web** (ELL 4-7, College Prep, and Occupational Prep)
Includes Northstar Digital Literacy, career paths, and Accuplacer instruction.
- **DVD/work packets** (ELL 1-5)
4 DVD options with take-home work packets.

How to tell your learners about DL...

- One-on-one: Identify good candidates and approach them individually with the suggestion. "Hey, so-and-so, I noticed that you do a lot of extra studying at home and you've often asked me for work outside of class. Would you like to do that in a regularly structured way?"
- With a DL teacher: Ask one of us to visit your class.
- With restraint: Make it clear that it's not for everyone. It can be challenging and lonely. It requires consistent time, independence, and internet access.
- Any questions, email adam.kieffer@spps.org, jessica.ess@spps.org, or ashley.behr@spps.org