

Section 102. Definitions.

"Instructional paraprofessional." School employee who works under the direction of a certificated staff member to support and assist in providing instructional programs and services to eligible children.

"Remote instruction." Method in which academic lessons, activities, assignments, and examinations are performed and delivered when students and instructors are not physically present in a traditional setting.

Section 1205.8. Remote Instruction Tools and Training.--

(a) School entities shall provide school employes, including professional educators and instructional paraprofessionals, with training to promote the effective and competent delivery of remote instruction. The following shall apply:

(1) Training shall address, but shall not be limited to:

(i) Teaching methodology and technological devices and programs available to employes to implement remote instruction and design and facilitate online learning.

(ii) Best practices for school entities regarding remote instruction, including, but not limited to, student engagement.

(iii) Recognition of the signs of the mental, educational, and emotional impact of remote instruction on students and appropriate resources for students who are experiencing such impact.

(iv) The school entity's policies regarding remote instruction strategies.

(v) The school entity's policies regarding connecting students with school-sponsored educational, medical, and social services that are traditionally administered when students are in attendance in-person.

(2) Training shall be developed according to evidence-based or evidence-informed programs that are tailored to the local community and reflect current best practices related to remote instruction and online learning design, development, and strategies.

(3) School employes required to undergo continuing professional education under section 1205.2 or 1205.5 shall receive credit toward the school employes' continuing professional education requirements if the training program has been approved by the Department of Education.

(4) The school entity shall make a reasonable effort to facilitate a time and location for school employes under this section to participate in the training during paid working hours or in-service training.

(b) the department shall promulgate regulations related to the competencies and concepts that shall be provided and completed in the remote and online instruction training.

(c) As used in this section, the following words and phrases shall have the meanings given to them in this subsection:

"Evidence-based" shall have the meaning given in section 8101(21) of the Every Student Succeeds Act (Public Law 114-95, 129 Stat. 1802).

"School employe" shall have the meaning given to the term "professional employe" in section 1101(1).

"School entity" shall mean a public school, including a school district, charter school, cyber charter school, regional charter school, intermediate unit or area career and technical school, a private school or a nonpublic school.

(1205.7 added June 28, 2019, P.L.146, No.18)

Section 1207.5. Remote Instruction Academic Preparation Requirements

(a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a baccalaureate teacher preparation program operating in the Commonwealth shall provide courses and experiences in professional studies which seek to develop knowledge and skills related to the most current remote instruction and online learning tools, programs, design and methodology.

(i) Each baccalaureate teacher preparation program shall review its curriculum related to remote instruction and implement the necessary changes and updates to remain current with evidence-based findings as deemed necessary by the Department of Education of the Commonwealth.

(b) The Department of Education of the Commonwealth shall promulgate regulations which seek to offer guidance to

baccalaureate teacher preparation programs operating in
the Commonwealth.