

Virtual Teaching Academy
Session 1 Recap
Introduction
Noon-1:30p.m. EDT
June 26, 2020

On behalf of the University of Phoenix, Blackboard and everyone associated with the Alliance for Virtual Learning, thank you for attending our inaugural Virtual Teaching Academy. Following each session, a high-level outline will be emailed to you.

For your convenience, important links can be found below. Additionally, please feel free to use the hashtag #VTA2020 across your social media platforms. Don't be shy about the fantastic work you're doing on behalf of your students!

*Please use the "Webinar link" provided below, to join each daily session.

Important links:

*Webinar link: https://applauncher.gotowebinar.com/#notStarted/280718920414727439/en_US

Link to presentations: <https://content.blackboard.com/virtual-teaching-academy>

Link to VTA sessions: <http://content.blackboard.com/virtual-teaching-academy>

General contact email: info@blackboard.com

Note: If you have chosen to add our Webinar sessions directly to your virtual calendar of choice, you will be notified to attend each daily session at the correct local time

Host: Dr. Patricia Hoge
Contact: pathoge@comcast.net

Introduction:

- What's bringing us together? – COVID-19. Since March of 2020, more than 50 million students and teachers were sent home and forced to adapt to a new reality. This Virtual Teaching Academy is designed to help you adapt to our new normal.
- COVID-19 has shed light on the inequities that exist within school districts throughout the country and we want to leverage this opportunity to make things better for everyone ... throughout this pandemic and beyond.

Background: We asked. You answered. We listened.

- UOPX Survey
 - 1 in 5 teachers feel they're not prepared for virtual learning
 - 41 percent of teachers feel overwhelmed
- Operating Assumptions
 - Virtual learning is here to stay for the foreseeable future
 - We believe the virtual teaching/learning experience must improve
 - We believe digital learning and technology can dramatically improve the student experience
- Understanding the terminology we'll use during the Virtual Teaching Academy:
 - Virtual/online teaching and learning are synonyms
 - Hybrid/blended/HiFlex teaching and learning
 - Remote/distance Teaching and Learning
 - This does not mean students were learning virtually or online
 - Teaching/learning at/from home

Planning and Decision-making Blueprint

The blueprint you have been provided is segmented into five main areas:

- Infrastructure
 - Instructional Resources
 - Think about the "Why" first and then answer the "What."
 - Example: When choosing devices for students:
 - Think about what you're trying to do and why and *then* choose a device that meets your needs. In other words, don't choose a device first before you have a plan. E.g. Your district doesn't want to buy Chrome Books and then realize that they don't meet your needs.
- Equity & Access (Digital Equity and Access)
 - Equitable access means that each student has access to the same level of instruction and resources
 - Supporting Special Needs students:
 - How do schools meet the needs of I.E.P. (Individual Education Plan) hours?
 - Best Practices in Virtual Teaching
- Instructional Practices (Synchronous and Asynchronous)
 - Best practices when teaching and learning move home.

- These practices should look different based on the age of the students and the subjects being taught
 - Evidence of Student Learning:
 - Are students learning and how do we know?
 - Data Analysis to make sure that students are learning/retaining information
 - Time is the “constant” Learning is the “variable” but with online leaning this is flipped.
- Engagement
 - Supporting and communicating with families when learning moves home.
 - Students: When students do come back to school be very intentional with your students. Use your in-person time to really connect and pay attention to the emotional needs of your students.
 - Parents: Consider leveraging “text-based” communication with parents and maintain the level of engagement with parents that has been a byproduct of the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - Strike the correct balance of parental involvement

In closing, we hope you embrace this journey. Please use the VTA Blueprint to guide you through this journey, leverage the resources that you are given and above all, stay connected. We’re in this together! On the following page you can find a Q&A.

Q: Best way to engage younger learners?

A: With young learners, it's important to start their day w/ consistency. They love to talk about themselves and share what they're learning with their classmates.

Remember, it is important not to assume that every student has to be on the same schedule. You may want to prioritize having younger students on-site more often than older students. Young learners thrive with routine and structure. It's important that young students hear from their classmates with respect to asking them questions such as: How did you arrive at that answer?

Q: What's the best way to overcome language barriers?

A: Both Google and Microsoft have really good translation services, but you may have to really rely on physically printing a lot of materials. Most Learning Management Systems (LMS) have offer support for up to 80 different languages. Really consider at look at implementing a full-service LMS.

Q: Platforms you'd recommend?

A: Schoology; Canvas. Note: Other options will be provided to you to consider later.

Q: Best way to maintain engagement?

A: Think about things from the perspective of your students. If students begin to "drop-off" do your best to figure out why? Now more than ever, educators are a one-stop-shop, so we really need to step-up and figure out how to work together better with parents and community partners.

Q: What's the title of the book you mentioned?

A: *The Power of Place* – Available via Amazon

Note: Please don't simply try to recreate your curriculum virtually. This is now a team sport. Please consider developing open-source curriculum with your colleagues. Leverage one another.

Note: Discussion-based assessments are really a one-on-one with students and can be very valuable.

Note: It's very important for school leaders to be flexible and have contingency plans. Plan A; Plan B; Plan C

Q: How do we educate everyone equitably?

A: Think of it from a justice perspective ... put your most vulnerable students at the center of everything you do and work outwardly from there.