

## Online Tutoring

### Guidance for Selecting Students for Online Tutoring

High-dosage, low-ratio tutoring accelerates students' learning in literacy or math by supporting them with access to grade-level content and providing a high dosage of personalized instruction to fill gaps in learning they have missed. This is accomplished by providing just-in-time support with skills and strategies which directly align to the content and standards students receive in their core instruction. Tutoring has shown success with rapidly accelerating students who are just below proficiency. Tennessee has implemented high-dosage, low-ratio tutoring to accelerate students who are performing below grade level and help them become proficient.

T.C.A § 49-6-3115(f)(2) authorizes the department to procure online tutoring providers for districts to provide online tutoring services to students. The department has procured two (2) online tutoring providers to be used through the 2024-25 and 2025-26 school years at no cost to LEAs/public charter schools. While the focus of T.C.A § 49-6-3115(f)(2) is to support districts to provide tutoring in ELA for any student in grades K – 3 who was retained from the previous year, the online tutoring providers have an expanded scope to allow for district flexibility on how to provide this early grade ELA tutoring. The online tutoring providers can provide tutoring to any student in a 1:1 online setting in ELA or math for grades K–8. Tutoring will be synchronous, in that one student will work with one live tutor via a digital platform, for the duration of each 30–45 minute tutoring session.

The Tennessee Department of Education will release a limited number of licenses to each district to use online tutoring for the duration of each year, based on your district's number of students required to receive tutoring in grades K - 4. Each license provides online tutoring for one year per student. Online tutoring should not be a district's only tutoring plan but rather should complement a more comprehensive plan. Each license should be assigned to one student to be used for the duration of the year. This guidance document outlines how a district may approach student selection, placement, and rollout of online tutoring.

#### ***Tennessee's Required Tutoring Model***

Students receiving required tutoring (students using tutoring as a 4<sup>th</sup> grade promotion pathway and kindergarten – grade 3 retained students) must receive tutoring that meets the requirements outlined in the [Required Tutoring document](#). For the purposes of this document, this group of students will be referred to as students receiving "required tutoring." The online tutoring providers will work with districts to ensure Tennessee's tutoring model is followed.

Note: For more information about students required to receive tutoring in 5<sup>th</sup> grade as a part of the conference pathway, please see [this document](#). District should consider if students receiving 5<sup>th</sup> grade tutoring as a part of the conference pathway would benefit from being served through an online tutoring model.

### Online Tutoring Model

Online tutoring is high-dosage, low-ratio tutoring provided to K - 8 students via an internet-based platform where a trained tutor provides tutoring in math or ELA. For the purposes of this document, this will be referred to as “online tutoring.”

Online tutoring increases scheduling flexibility and increases staffing capacity for schools/districts, but also poses some challenges. For this reason, there are slight changes in the requirements for online tutoring in order to support schools and districts with effective implementation. For example, in-person tutoring can be staffed at a ratio of 3 students to 1 tutor while online tutoring must be a 1:1 ratio.

<b>Subject</b>	<p>ELA or math (students in a single subject for at least 1 semester. Students in required tutoring in ELA for the duration of the year)</p> <p><i>Increased flexibility for students not in required tutoring</i></p>
<b>Staffing</b>	<p>Online tutoring provider staff that have completed the required TN ALL Corps training</p> <p><i>Training requirement not changed, who provides the staff has changed</i></p>
<b>Group Size</b>	<p>1:1 (1 student per tutor)</p> <p><i>New requirement for online tutoring only</i></p>
<b>Frequency</b>	<p>Two to three sessions per week with sessions lasting 30-45 minutes per session</p> <p><i>No change from required tutoring model</i></p>
<b>Duration</b>	<p>Tutoring must be provided for at least 12 weeks each semester for the entire year</p> <p><i>No change from required tutoring model</i></p>
<b>Scheduling</b>	<p>Following a consistent, set schedule during the school day, when possible</p> <p><i>No change from required tutoring model</i></p>
<b>Technology</b>	<p>Each student must have access to a computer and headphones/microphone for each tutoring session</p> <p><i>New requirement for online tutoring only</i></p>
<b>Materials</b>	<p>Tier I-aligned high-quality materials aligned with classroom content should be used to reinforce classroom instruction</p> <p><i>No change from required tutoring model</i></p>
<b>Support</b>	<p>A staff member or trained adult must be present with students as they complete online tutoring. Staff members can supervise multiple students at a time</p> <p><i>New requirement for online tutoring only</i></p>

### **Student Selection for Online Tutoring**

Student selection for tutoring, especially online tutoring, should be carefully thought out. The intent of the online tutoring providers' contract is to increase districts' capacity to support students who are required to receive tutoring (K–3 students who were retained and 4<sup>th</sup> grade students on a promotion pathway).

However, the contract allows flexibility for districts to place students in higher grade levels and students who need tutoring in math on the online tutoring platform to free up staffing capacity to serve students in need of required tutoring in-person. *For example, a district may choose to place three students in need of 7<sup>th</sup> grade math tutoring in online tutoring to free up the staffing capacity of a teacher to provide in-person tutoring to 2<sup>nd</sup> grade ELA at the same time. A district may know that 7<sup>th</sup> grade math students can focus on a digital platform for 30-45 minutes whereas 2<sup>nd</sup> grade ELA students may not maintain focus for that duration of time.*

#### **Step 1: Determine Who Needs Tutoring**

- Identify which students must receive required tutoring (K–3 students who were retained and 4<sup>th</sup> grade students on a promotion pathway). These students are priority to schedule and serve.
- Analyze which students in grades K–8 are in the “approaching” category in math and/or ELA who would benefit from tutoring. After scheduling students who are required to receive tutoring, districts may use any unallocated licenses to provide online tutoring to other students who may receive benefit from it.

#### **Step 2: Determine Staffing and Scheduling**

- Estimate how many tutors can be utilized for tutoring, how many groups of students each tutor can serve, area(s) of expertise of each tutor, and level of experience (volunteer, certified educator, etc.).
- Review school schedules to determine when tutoring can take place during the school day. Tutoring cannot take the place of or require students to be pulled from any required classes. Often, districts will use an intervention block to provide tutoring at the same time other students are receiving other intervention supports.
- Compare scheduling and staffing to determine the total capacity of tutors to serve students. Consider hiring additional tutors or changing schedules to increase capacity, if needed.

#### **Step 3: Determine How and Where Online Tutoring Can Support**

- Consider where and how online tutoring can support your students who need tutoring. In-person tutoring has been proven to be the most effective model for providing tutoring, so the selection of students for online tutoring should be carefully considered.
- Consider the below factors when deciding who would most benefit from online tutoring.

Online tutoring should be prioritized for the following groups of students:

1. Students who cannot attend in-person tutoring: Students in grades K–8 who cannot attend in-person tutoring but could attend online tutoring outside of school time should be prioritized for receiving online tutoring. Districts and schools should make attempts to ensure that most students can receive tutoring during the school day. However, there are students who may have conflicts and cannot receive tutoring during the school day. Students who are prioritized for online tutoring should be below grade level, cannot attend tutoring in-person, *and* have a support system that would ensure attendance in online tutoring.
2. Students nearing proficiency: Online tutoring is most likely to be effective for K - 8 students who are close to achieving proficiency and who need additional support in order to reach proficiency. Therefore, districts may want to prioritize online tutoring for students who are near proficiency, rather than students with significant gaps.

### ***Other Considerations when Selecting Students for Online Tutoring***

- **Grade Level:** Tutoring sessions last at least 30 minutes, two times per week and are conducted on a computer. While tutoring is designed to be engaging, students in lower grades may have a harder time focusing on a computer for 30 minutes at a time to benefit from online tutoring. Older students who can sustain focus may receive greater benefit from online tutoring.
- **Flexible Staffing:** Younger students often are unable to concentrate on online tutoring for extended periods of time in a way that older students may be able to. Older students can be scheduled into online tutoring, freeing up the capacity of an older-grade teacher/tutor to support younger grades. For example, students in need of tutoring for 7<sup>th</sup> grade ELA may be scheduled into online tutoring, allowing the 7<sup>th</sup> grade teacher to then provide tutoring to 2<sup>nd</sup> grade ELA students in-person.
- **Student Supervision:** Students will need to be supervised while participating in online tutoring. A staff member must be present for the entirety of a tutoring session to support with logging in, keeping students on-track, and ensuring that sessions are running smoothly. Districts must make sure that there is someone to supervise and support students during online tutoring. While support staff will be able to supervise multiple students at a time, the number of students being supervised by one person at any given time should be limited so that each student can receive support, if needed. Students need to be supervised by someone that knows the technology, can trouble-shoot any problems, and can keep students on-track. If students are conducting online tutoring from an alternative setting than in school, it is the responsibility of the school to ensure the student is being supervised for the duration of tutoring.
- **Technology:** Students will need their own computer with headphones to participate in online tutoring. Students must have access to a computer (Chromebooks included) or tablet with internet access as well as working headphones and a microphone.
- **Length of Time in Tutoring:** Districts will have flexibility as to how frequently (2 – 3 times per week) sessions will take place and how long sessions will last (30 – 60 minutes). A student's age/grade level should be taken into consideration when developing an online tutoring program. Younger students will not be able to focus for great lengths of time, especially in an online setting.

### ***Roles and Responsibilities***

<b>Vendor</b>	<b>Department (TDOE)</b>	<b>District (LEA)</b>	<b>School</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Train tutors using the TN ALL Corps tutor training modules</li> <li>• Provide the platform and staff for each session</li> <li>• Communicate with the school if a session is cancelled</li> <li>• Monitor students' progress and attendance and report progress to districts/schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage each vendor to ensure that tutoring meets minimum requirements</li> <li>• Roster all students to the online tutoring platform</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appoint one point of contact to manage the contract</li> <li>• Work with all schools that have online tutoring within the district (including public charters)</li> <li>• Work with the vendor to schedule each tutoring session</li> <li>• Provide district rosters</li> <li>• Determine which students will receive online tutoring license</li> <li>• Communicate with families about online tutoring</li> <li>• Report any issues to the Department</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appoint one point of contact to manage the contract</li> <li>• Provide students with technology for each session</li> <li>• Ensure students attend each session</li> <li>• Supervise students receiving online tutoring</li> <li>• Communicate with the vendor if a session is cancelled</li> <li>• Communicate with families about online tutoring</li> <li>• Provide tutors with Tier-I materials and/or aligned materials</li> <li>• Provide tutors with focus areas for tutoring, if needed</li> <li>• Report any issues to the district (LEA) and department</li> </ul>