

Issue Date: January 29, 2024

# Flexible Pathways Talking Points

## Virtual and Blended Learning

Is this Flexible Pathway option the best choice? Below are prompting questions to be used with the [Vermont Flexible Pathways Tool](#) to assist in a conversation to determine if this pathway is the best fit. These sources do not represent an exhaustive list but are intended to provide a basis for discussion.

### What is Virtual Learning?

Virtual learning is a method of education where students learn in a fully online environment—enabling students from different geographical areas to engage with an academic institution, other students online and learn flexibly at their own pace. Virtual learning has historically been a flexible pathway in Vermont that has proven to be highly successful for many students. School leaders and teams can offer students access to learning pathways supported by entities such as VTVLC, that use licensed Vermont educators to deliver an array of instructional programming.

### What is Blended Learning?

Blended learning combines in-person teaching with asynchronous learning methods, where students work on online exercises and watch instructional videos, or other activities, during their own time. Online learning is a component of blended learning. This method of learning is usually done in a traditional brick-and-mortar building.

Hybrid learning is a form of blended learning where some students attend class in person while others join the class virtually from home. Educators teach remote and in-person students at the same time using tools like video conferencing hardware and software.

### Why Virtual and/or Blended Learning?

- Learn virtually anywhere/anytime
- Degree exploration/career exploration
- Ready to explore subjects not offered in your local high school/classes of personal interest
- Increased rigor/academic challenge
- Seek a diverse learning environment
- Prepare for potential post-secondary online learning
- Flexibility in scheduling to allow for additional pursuits, such as Work-Based Learning

### Are you ready for Virtual and/or Blended Learning?

- Social emotional reflection
  - Self-awareness - Demonstrates self-advocacy, self-motivation
  - Social awareness – Understanding social and ethical norms
  - Self-management – Critical thinking, problem solving

Contact: Student Pathways Division at [AOE.DualEnrollment@vermont.gov](mailto:AOE.DualEnrollment@vermont.gov)

- Responsible decision making – Time management
- Relationship skills – Communication, networking
- Learning environment aligns with learning style
  - Technology skills
  - Self-directed learner
- Academic Reflection
  - How does this experience meet performance indicators necessary for graduation
    - Academic content area
    - Transferable skill
  - Course aligns with learning goals in PLP
  - Attendance record
  - The IEP team or the 504 team approves
    - Updated IEP/504 documents to reflect online learning
    - Become familiar with accommodations/modifications available in an online course
  - Completed VTVLC’s Introduction to Online Learning

## **Do you have?**

- Parental, Community, and College support outside of secondary school.
  - Possible support resources:
    - VTVLC Parent Handbook
    - VTVLC Student Handbook
    - VTVLC’s Supporting Online Students for School Counselors / Coordinators
- Adequate technology and internet access
- Time is built into the school schedule to work on the course

## **Have you?**

- Discussed this with your family
- Spoken with your school counselor or advisor
- Located online or in-person college resources

## **Have you thought about?**

- Time management tools you will use to balance a VBL opportunity with a sports/club activity and meeting other obligations at home and/or at an outside job