Using Third-Party Learning Platforms to Engage SHS Students in the Fully Remote, Stand Alone Learning Model
Report to the School Committee

Amy Clouter, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment
Todd Bazydlo, Principal, Shrewsbury High School

Overview

For this coming school year, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education has mandated that school districts must provide an all remote learning option for families. We know that some families must utilize this option because their child or a family member has a medical issue that makes them more vulnerable to COVID-19, and in other cases families may not be comfortable sending their children back to school in person.

Our first preference would have been to have SHS faculty teach students who are in the fully remote program. However, given the number of students whose families opted for the hybrid model (approximately 80%), and given the complexity of having so many unique class schedules amongst the 350+ SHS students who will be fully remote (across the approximately 250 courses that SHS offers), the reality is that we do not have the staffing capacity to provide both.

Students at SHS learning in a fully remote learning model will be in a separate program from those learning in-person for two days and remotely for three days each week in the hybrid program. As noted in our school district's reopening plan, students in the fully remote program are considered a separate group, called Cohort D, to distinguish between the experiences of students in an alternating in-person and remote "hybrid" model and this stand-alone fully remote learning model.

The Fully Remote Program Model at SHS

In order to provide the range of specific courses that each Cohort D SHS student requires for course credit, progress toward graduation, and preparing for post-secondary success (typically higher education for most SHS students), the fully remote educational program for SHS will consist of courses provided asynchronously by third-party online education providers which students will work through independently. This work will include viewing online lessons taught by licensed educators, engaging with interactive online curriculum materials, and completing online assessments. Additionally, a team of SHS educators will be assigned to supervise and support Cohort D students' independent remote learning in each core subject, and these SHS educators will be the teachers of record for course grades (more on this below). Further, additional ongoing connections with the SHS community will be provided wherever possible, such as participation in co-curricular activities, access to remote school-wide events, etc.

So who will be delivering instruction to students learning in the stand alone full remote model? Students in the fully remote model will learn independently and asynchronously, engaging with lessons prepared and recorded by the licensed educators from a third-party online platform, primarily [Edgenuity](), but in some cases [Virtual High School (VHS)](), or another provider will be utilized. These lessons will include video lectures, screencasts, and interactive learning tools.

Monitoring Student Progress

Although Edgenuity and Virtual High School courses are taught by licensed educators, Edgenuity's and Virtual High School's teachers are not employed by the district. However, Shrewsbury educators will serve as coordinators for the purpose of grading more complex assessments assigned in Edgenuity, Virtual High School, or by SHS. In addition, coordinators will monitor attendance and student progress for the caseload of students they serve.

Full Remote / Cohort D Coordinator Responsibilities
Shrewsbury educators working with Shrewsbury High School students in Cohort D will not need to plan for or deliver daily instruction. However, for all courses, a teacher of record will be required to:
- take daily attendance
- monitor student progress through the learning platform dashboard (including quizzes, course assignments, etc) each day
- hold online extra help sessions/office hours to provide academic support
- grade larger or more complex assignments (papers, lab reports, SHS common assessments, etc.) that are not part of the online platform
- maintain grades in PowerSchool/third party platform, including progress reports and report cards
- collaborate with the team and coordinate support for students, including being the first point of contact for students and parents as well as the liaison to connect with members of the SHS leadership team and School Counseling Department

- communicate with Cohort D students' parents/caretakers a) collectively to provide general program information and updates, and b) individually as needed to discuss a student's progress or needs

Each educator will be responsible for one content area across two grades. Teachers will work as part of a four person team, and each teacher will assume responsibility for supervising and supporting the learning for a caseload of students across either Grades 9 & 10 or Grades 11 & 12. We anticipate needing two teams to support the needs of Cohort D students at this time.

Why Edgenuity?

Why did Shrewsbury Public Schools choose Edgenuity? The district selected Edgenuity to be the main provider for remote learning at the high school level for several reasons. First of all, Edgenuity is one of two companies vetted by a group of over 40 educators at the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). A diverse group of curriculum experts, administrators and teachers considered a variety of vendors with the goal of identifying companies whose products aligned to state standards across grade spans. Edgenuity is a longstanding provider of virtual and blended learning solutions for middle school and high school nationwide. Accordingly, their curriculum mirrors state standards, and their course catalog covers many of the courses that the SHS students in Cohort D initially selected. Secondly, Edgenuity has been accredited by a variety of public and private organizations in the education industry. In use in public school districts Massachusetts for some time, Edgenuity has a track record of working successfully with districts to meet diverse needs, from credit recovery to providing remote learning options to student athletes. More to the point, since school closure and in response to the DESE process, several districts nearby have also opted to work with Edgenuity because the asynchronous videos and lessons are created and taught by licensed teachers. Finally, Edgenuity is a cost effective solution.

Since Edgenuity is not the only platform our district will be using, it's helpful that the terms of our contract will allow the district to flexibly meet the range of needs of the students at

Shrewsbury High School that are in Cohort D. This will make it possible to work with additional vendors as needed.

Third-Party Platform Course Offerings

Shrewsbury will be using a blend of platforms to meet student needs.   Most courses will be available through Edgenuity, including Foreign Language and many AP course offerings, while others will be offered through Virtual High School (VHS).

Please the tables below for the courses available.

Mathematics	Science	Social Studies
Algebra I* Algebra II* Geometry* Precalculus* Statistics Advanced Quantitative Reasoning	Biology* Chemistry* Introduction to Physics* Environmental Science	World History I/World History II United States History I United States History II* Human Geography Government
English	**Foreign Languages**	**Physical Education/Health**
English 9* English 10* English 11* English 12*	Spanish I, II, III French I, II, III Chinese I, II Latin I, II	Foundation of Personal Fitness Healthy Living (semester) Lifetime Fitness (full year) *These courses can be taken at the Honors level.

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The AP courses listed below in the left hand column are available through Edgenuity. Additionally, we are working with Virtual High School (VHS) to provide opportunities for students to take AP courses in subjects not available via Edgenuity, which are listed in the right-hand column.

AP Offerings for Cohort D

Advanced Placement (AP): Edgenuity	Advanced Placement(AP): Virtual High School
Biology Environmental Science French Spanish U.S History Human Geography Psychology Calculus AB Statistics English Language and Composition English Literature and Composition	Music Theory Latin Chemistry Physics 1 Physics C Calculus BC

Fully remote options for upper level foreign language courses (IV & V) are in the process of being finalized, and this information will be communicated to students and families who chose those courses during the spring registration process as soon as we have it.

Core and Elective Options Available
SHS school counselors will align each Cohort D student's requested SHS course selections with those available in Edgenuity or VHS.   The SHS School Counseling Department will also ensure each Cohort D student's courses will meet the school district's graduation requirements. It is important to note however that not all of the electives offered at SHS will be available through Edgenuity. Further, students will be required to take Health and/or Physical Education. For this reason, some students may not have an elective or may need to enroll in an elective offered by Edgenuity that corresponds with a course offering in the SHS Program of Studies. Finally, the opportunities for electives for students in Cohort D may be limited if students elect to switch to a hybrid learning model.
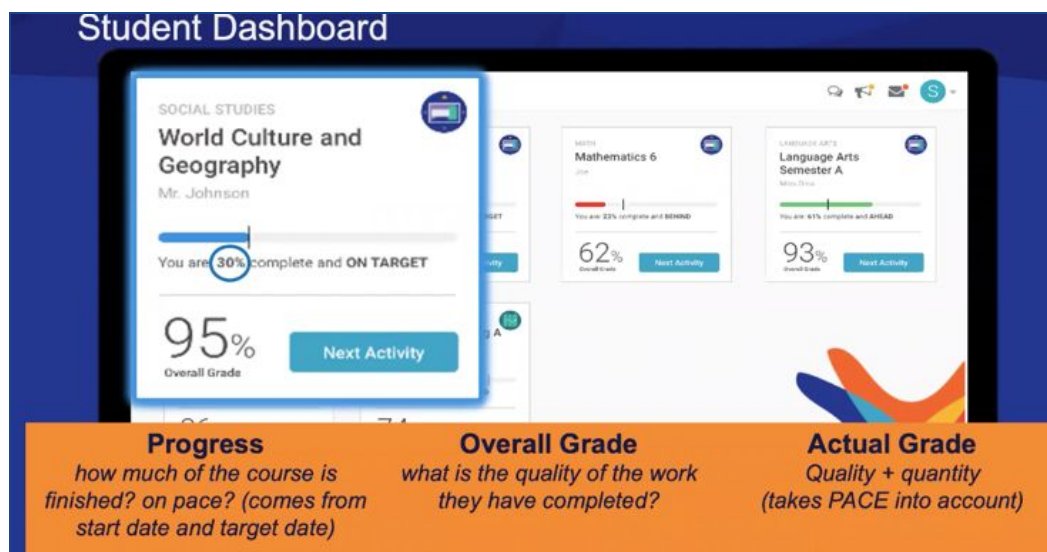
We are mindful that many students in Cohort D are juniors and seniors, and we are committed to ensuring that students interested in applying to college can meet college admission requirements.

Learning With a Third-Party Platform

As mentioned previously, students in Cohort D will learn online in an independent, asynchronous way. This means that students progress through Edgenuity courses independently. Regardless of the course, students and families can expect common components, including:

- Direct teaching via instructional videos
- Lessons grounded in sound pedagogy, including activating prior knowledge and tools that enable online instructors to support students individually
- Interactive tasks and assignments, including group discussion boards
- A blend of quizzes, formative assessments and formal tests, and
- Learning tools that enable students to access lessons and organize their work

This brief [overview](#) of the student experience can be found on Edgenuity's website. The courses have been built to encourage meaningful practice, independent study, reflection and academic honesty. Like the educators at SHS, the teachers at Edgenuity are real people. Further, students in Cohort D will have to meet high expectations, and our coordinators will ensure that they do. Accordingly, students may not skip instructional videos or take quizzes before completing the reading. Rather, students in Cohort D should expect that they will be accountable to fully participate and engage with the course content, just as they would through Schoology.

The Remote Learning Schedule
The time allotments listed in the revised remote learning model per subject area would remain consistent for students in Cohort D. In a remote learning model, students work independently through course content. Just as they do in an in-person instructional model, students will need to manage various assignments within each course. Each day students will be expected to log in to demonstrate consistent attendance, and attendance will be closely monitored in Edgenuity or Virtual High School, just as we monitor attendance at SHS. Specifically, class attendance will be taken daily and made part of the student record. Attendance will be used to gauge student involvement and will be factored into the students' earned credit.

Although students in Cohort D can complete their work independently and asynchronously, it is recommended they follow the hybrid academic schedule (see table below) to get into a regular school routine. SHS teachers who are supervising and supporting Cohort D students will be able to evaluate a student's attendance by monitoring the number of active minutes students are logged into the online learning platform, and by checking their progress through the coursework. Students may wish to access online coaching or support, and that is available for every course. However, students should anticipate that live help is limited to a prescribed schedule during the school day.

7:35am - 8:20am	Period 1
8:25am - 9:10am	Period 2
9:15am - 10am	Period 3
10:05am - 10:50am	Period 4
10:55am - 11:40am	Period 5
11:45am - 1:10pm	Period 6
11:45am - 12:10pm	1st lunch
12:15pm - 12:40pm	2nd lunch
12:45pm - 1:10pm	3rd lunch
1:15pm - 2pm	Period 7

Students can access their school counselors by scheduling meetings with counselors via email and Zoom meetings.   Additionally, we are working on developing opportunities for students to participate in activities such as homeroom and/or advisory sessions. These opportunities will be communicated to students in all cohorts when these plans are finalized.

Student Responsibilities
As a result of offering classes through Virtual High School, the Counseling Department at Shrewsbury High School has learned that it's important to emphasize with students their responsibilities for managing their course loads.

Students in Cohort D will be required to:
- Manage their time effectively across multiple courses
- Balance learning online with offline required reading and assignments
- Use supports as needed, including live tutoring within the Edgenuity platform
- Learn to use the various features of online platforms (like Edgenuity's Guided Notes) to master new material, and
- Submit work, complete assignments and respond to virtual feedback.

For these reasons, it is our hope that students using Edgenuity will be well prepared for the kind of instructional models in use by institutions of higher education.

The Academic Calendar
The start and end dates of quarters, semesters, and grading period in Edgenuity and Virtual High School will closely align with SHS grade reporting dates listed below.

Semester 1: 9/12/20-2/2/21
                     Quarter 1:   9/15/20 - 11/17/20   (42 days)
                     Quarter 2: 11/18/20 - 2/2/21   (43 days)

Semester 2:   2/3/20-6/16/20
                   Quarter 3:   2/3/21 - 4/8/21   (42 days)
                   Quarter 4: 4/19/21 - 6/16/21   (43 days)

Student Supports
The district will be providing special education services remotely to students in Cohort D who have an Individualized Education Program. The SHS Special Education Department will coordinate these services with each student and their family directly.

Grading
The third-party learning platforms have pre-designed assessments. Some assignments will be scored automatically and recorded, some will be reviewed and/or graded by the SHS teachers supporting Cohort D, and some assignments will not be graded, as they are intended to help students activate prior knowledge and/or reflect on their learning. However, even ungraded assignments "count" - the activities students complete will be factored into their progress. Finally, students and families should understand that it's not possible to take an assessment until completing the required course content.

Conclusion

In an ideal scenario, all our students would be back in school, learning safely and effectively in person. Unfortunately, COVID conditions make it impossible even to provide a fully remote learning model to our high school students taught by Shrewsbury educators. Our partnership

with Edgenuity and other third party providers depicts our best attempt to replicate academic content while allowing for the flexibility our students may need. Finally, using an asynchronous platform allows the district to structure schedules in the hope that all our students in Cohort D remain connected to their school community in real time, whenever possible.