

Texas' legislative leadership and TEA recently announced that \$200 million would be available for eLearning devices and home internet solutions through Operation Connectivity. Additionally, TEA is working to provide free remote learning tools as part of Texas Home Learning 3.0 (e.g. Learning Management Systems and high-quality curriculum) as an option to districts, so they do not have to incur the expense locally.

For guidance and FAQs on Operation Connectivity, please see the **Operation Connectivity** section located on the [Instructional Continuity](#) COVID-19 page.

For information on Texas Home Learning 3.0, please see the [Texas Home Learning](#) webpage.

## Guidance on Instructional Materials: Section Topics

*Click on the section topics below to go directly to that section of the FAQ*

- [Funding of Instructional Materials](#)
- [Health and Hygiene Practices in Returning Instructional Materials](#)

## Funding of Instructional Materials

### 1. How will districts be reimbursed/funded for asynchronous virtual instruction materials that they purchase as part of their programs for next year?

The technology and instructional materials allotment can be used to pay for technological equipment that contributes to student learning, including equipment that supports the use of instructional materials ([TAC §66.1307](#)). Laptops, tablets, hotspots, and other technological equipment used for virtual instruction are allowable allotment expenses. The allotment can also be used to pay for providing access to technological equipment for instructional use ([TAC §66.1307](#)). This includes digital tools used for supporting students' virtual learning, such as platforms to provide virtual instruction (e.g. Zoom, Google Classroom, Microsoft TEAMS) and internet access or data plans needed for virtual instruction.

The technology and instructional materials allotment (TIMA) is a biennial allotment. Money deposited in a school district's instructional materials and technology account during each state fiscal biennium remains in the account and available for use by the district for the entire biennium. At the end of each biennium, a district with unused money in the district's account may carry forward any remaining balance to the next biennium ([TEC §31.0212](#)).

Districts can enter disbursement requests in EMAT as a reimbursement to the district by following the usual disbursement request process. For assistance creating a disbursement request in EMAT, view the [EMAT trainings](#) on the TEA website, review the FAQs on the [IM Help Desk](#) or, submit an IM Help Desk ticket.

## **2. Can I charge students for materials and devices to be used at home for remote instruction?**

"Instructional material" is defined as content that conveys the essential knowledge and skills of a subject in the public-school curriculum through a medium or a combination of media for conveying information to a student. The term includes a book, supplementary materials, a combination of a book, workbook, and supplementary materials, computer software, magnetic media, DVD, CD-ROM, computer courseware, on-line services, or an electronic medium, or other means of conveying information to the student or otherwise contributing to the learning process through electronic means, including open education resource instructional material.

A district may not charge fees for instructional materials, workbooks, laboratory supplies, or other supplies necessary for participation in any instructional course with a few exceptions. A district may charge a security deposit for the return of materials, supplies, or equipment. Additionally, a student who fails to return in an acceptable condition all instructional materials and technological equipment forfeits the right to free instructional materials and technological equipment until all instructional materials and technological equipment previously issued but not returned in an acceptable condition are paid for by the student, parent, or guardian.

## **3. Can I charge a student for insurance related to devices or hotspots issued for use during remote instruction?**

A district may not charge a student a nonrefundable fee for issuance of equipment issued for remote instruction. However, a district may charge a security deposit for the return of materials, supplies, or equipment. A district must adopt reasonable procedures for waiving a deposit or fee if a student or the student's parent or guardian is unable to pay the fee. Additionally, a student who fails to return in an acceptable condition all instructional materials and technological equipment forfeits the right to free instructional materials and technological equipment until all instructional materials and technological equipment previously issued but not returned in an acceptable condition are paid for by the student, parent, or guardian.

## **4. What steps should I take if the instructional materials a student returned at the end of last school year were not in acceptable condition?**

Each student (or student's parent or guardian) is responsible for all instructional materials and technological equipment not returned in an acceptable condition by the student. A fee may be charged if students fail to return materials in an acceptable condition. Students who fail to return materials in an acceptable condition forfeit the right to free instructional materials and technology until all previously -issued materials are returned or reimbursed. A district must adopt reasonable procedures for waiving a fee if a student or the student's parent or guardian is unable to pay the fee. Districts/schools may withhold student records if materials are not returned in acceptable condition or if fees are not paid but may not prevent students from graduating.

## 5. What steps should I take if a student did not return instructional materials that were issued last school year?

Each student (or student's parent or guardian) is responsible for all instructional materials and technological equipment not returned in an acceptable condition by the student. A fee may be charged if students fail to return materials. Students who fail to return materials in an acceptable condition forfeit the right to free instructional materials and technology until all previously - issued materials are returned or reimbursed. A district must adopt reasonable procedures for waiving a fee if a student or the student's parent or guardian is unable to pay the fee. Districts/schools may withhold student records if materials are not returned or if fees are not paid but may not prevent students from graduating.

## Health and Hygiene Practices in Returning Instructional Materials

- Follow the CDC guidelines for [cleaning and disinfecting](#).

### Textbooks/paper-based materials

These materials are not considered a high risk for transmission and do not need additional cleaning or disinfection procedures. Materials in braille usually have plastic coatings that can be wiped down with alcohol-based cleaners.

### Electronics

1. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products.
2. Make sure to clean any accessories, chargers, etc., along with the product itself.
3. If no manufacturer guidance is available, consider the use of alcohol-based wipes or sprays containing at least 70% alcohol to disinfect touch screens.
4. After cleaning, dry surfaces thoroughly to avoid pooling of liquids.