Step-by-step plan: What you can do now that schools (mostly) have to be closed

versie 0.95, 17 March 2020

Distance learning is a solution to provide education now that many students can no longer go to school. In many cases it concerns a mix of working digitally, working with methods that use other material and other (physical or creative) working methods. This step-by-step plan is intended for administrators and school leaders who want to use lessons from a distance.

Organizing a distance lesson takes time. Take the time it takes to make trade-offs, implement them, and give teachers room to prepare. Good communication is very important at all times. Communicate to teachers, students, and parents what you intend to do when you start remote learning and what you expect from them.

With this step-by-step plan, via Kennisnet.nl and Vo.lesoptijd.nl, we offer support for the best possible use of distance learning. We will continue to supplement this information. We will share questions and answers with each other through our Linkedin group.

Step 1: make an inventory of whether the preconditions are in place

Distance learning is a mix of learning by digital and other means. In this step, you will examine to what extent it is possible in your situation to use digital working properly. Are all the preconditions for working digitally in place? What is available to work remotely and where should be the priority? Also in this situation it is good to start from Four-in-balance, with a pragmatic view.

ICT facilities
Are ICT facilities available?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do students have their own device at home? And also a microphone and webcam?</td>
<td>If not: then make an inventory of what is available (e.g. a smartphone) or can be borrowed from the institution/board/municipality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do students have a school account they can use at home and/or an email address?</td>
<td>If not: then create school accounts for all students and teachers if possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the school and the students at home have a good internet connection?</td>
<td>If not: then increase the connection or work without material (e.g. video) that require a high internet connection.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Check!

Educational resources and environments
Are learning materials available?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does your school have a digital learning environment that also offers enough functionality to work online from home?</td>
<td>If not: then use the applications that you have available. Provide a communication option between teachers, students and parents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are your school's teaching resources useful and accessible from home?</td>
<td>If not: then contact the publisher. Often digital versions are now (temporarily) available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you have learning resources that make student progress visible automatically, so that the teacher can anticipate it?</td>
<td>If not: then progress can also be followed by sharing documents and evidence, such as photos. Choose an approachable way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you know whether privacy is guaranteed from home? Also as alternative learning resources are used?</td>
<td>If not: then check the privacyconvenant and/or the appchecker. Watch out for purchases that stick with you longer and must continue to pay for it after this period.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is guidance for helpers (e.g. parents) available? Do all parents have the opportunity to provide that help?</td>
<td>If not: then provide clear instructions for parents and other helpers. Organize extra support if parents cannot help, such as calling times with these students.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Step 2: Plan the teaching

In this step you determine what students will learn in the coming period and what are important points for attention. Prior to setting up the lessons, priorities must be determined. What should at least be done now?

→ Choose which lesson content you will work with. Not everything that was planned can be done. Think about what students really have to do and what is also manageable now teaching at distance.

→ Not every student can receive the same support at home. Think about how you can provide additional support to certain groups (such as disadvantaged students). For example, make sure that teachers take the time to contact some students more often.

→ Unfortunately, distance learning is not equally suitable for every group of students. Some students, for example special education students, need more direct guidance and support. Check to what extent lessons can still be realized for these students, for example with the help of parents or research other possibilities.

→ Check where it is possible to let students get to work independently, for example with a paper or with adaptive learning resources. Have students give regular feedback to keep the connection.

→ Keep students away from the computer all day. Also let them work on paper or with their hands. They can then photograph their work and share it with the teachers. Of course it is also important that there is time for social contacts and breaks.

→ Support the teachers as best as possible, for example with the help of ICT staff. Also make sure your teachers can ask questions somewhere. There are also many parties (educational counseling services and independent educational advisers) that can support you and your teachers, make use of existing relationships.

→ Investigate to what extent it is possible to involve parents in education in order to get students to work or to help them further. Keep in mind that due to different circumstances, not every parent will be able to help equally. Make it clear what you ask of parents; they are not teachers and cannot take over that role.
**Step 3: set up ICT facilities to collaborate and learn**

Different ICT resources can help you to enable collaboration and learning together, even if most students have to stay at home. In particular, make use of the ICT facilities that you already have in-house and the educational resources that you already use.

→ When setting up digital meeting places, use your current infrastructure.

◆ collaborative environment: many schools have a contract with Microsoft or Google. Through their website you will find tips on how to facilitate distance learning.

◆ learning environment: the learning environment also offers opportunities for communication, document sharing and collaboration. You can also make use of this.

→ Teachers can use various digital learning resources to teach remotely. If they are not used to this, it is important to support them in this. On lesoptijd.nl you will find information and concrete tips for secondary education. Make use of educational resources that teachers and students are familiar with.

→ Find out what additional support your ICT suppliers, software suppliers, educational publishers and school suppliers / distributors offer. We provide information about the (extra) support that suppliers offer at lesoptijd.nl. This overview will be expanded in the coming days.

**Step 4: follow the developments, nationally and at school, and adjust where necessary**

In the coming weeks, much will be demanded from teachers, students, parents and education professionals. It is important to follow the developments at your school and national developments and to respond to questions.

→ Keep an eye on how everyone is doing. Are teachers able to design distance education? Do you reach all students sufficiently? Make regular meetings with your team to keep an eye on how the teaching is progressing. Also pay attention to stress complaints from teachers and students. Are teachers not setting the bar too high? How do students who quickly suffer from stress and performance pressure deal with the situation?

→ What are the national developments? Is it necessary to adjust the policy on the basis of newly taken measures?

→ Keep in mind that students, teachers, staff and parents can get sick and adjust the policy accordingly.

→ Keep the website of your suppliers (publishers, software suppliers, etc.) up to date. They also occasionally come up with new forms of support.

→ It is not yet clear how long the schools will remain closed. If this becomes a longer period, it is good to investigate how distance learning can be improved. Learn as much as possible with other schools and boards and share lessons learned via lesoptijd.nl. You can find inspiring examples of how other schools deal with distance education on the Leraar.nl website.

This step-by-step plan, the information about distance learning on Kennisnet.nl and the more concrete tips and guides for teachers and ICT managers on lesoptijd.nl will be further supplemented in the coming days. In our LinkedIn group you can leave suggestions and ask questions.