GETTING LEARNERS CONNECTED

STRATEGIC APPROACH TO PROVIDING INTERNET TO ALL

One of the greatest barriers to distance learning is the lack of Internet access outside of school for all students. This is commonly referred to as the "Homework Gap".

The Commonwealth's Broadband Connect Team Contact: https://www.commonwealthconnect.virginia.gov/what-is-CC

MOBILE HOTSPOTS AND SERVICES

Purchase and loan out mobile Wi-Fi hotspots to students that need them. School divisions can purchase mobile Wi-Fi devices along with monthly service charges for wireless.
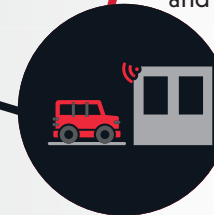
COMPUTING DEVICES/FILTERING

Purchase computing devices for students and teachers/staff that need them along with any monthly service charges for wireless. And schools could purchase filtering software for any 1:1 programs they plan to initiate.

EXTEND SCHOOL WI-FI TO PARKING LOTS OR OTHER AREAS (E.G. ATHLETIC FIELDS)

Schools can use their existing bandwidth and extend it out to athletic fields or other open spaces on school property.. They can purchase outdoor Wireless Access Points (WAPs) and the labor and materials needed to install the infrastructure. Divisions could look at opening up a closed school with existing fiber and extend the network out into the parking lot or other areas of the school. Schools could purchase mini-towers to install on top of school buildings to extend the Wi-Fi.

WI-FI ON BUSES OR OTHER MOBILE VERTICAL ASSETS (LIFTS, BUCKET TRUCKS ETC.)

Schools can equip school buses and other vertical assets with networking capabilities to park in locations throughout the locality.They could ask their locality if there are any bucket trucks available to use as a vertical asset in which to install WAPs and extend the Wi-Fi signal. If pursuing this option, schools will need to purchase mobile carrier services for the Wi-Fi on buses and/or mobile vertical assets. There is also a very innovative solution being tested using a utility trailer and solar panels for power to broadcast LTE service.

#GoOpenVA
VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

DIGITAL INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIAL

Schools can use #GoOpenVA, which is an open educational resources (OER) portal recently launched by the VDOE. https://goopenva.org/. Schools can enroll students and teachers for online classes and curriculum in Virtual Virginia. Schools can purchase a Learning Management System (LMS) and online curriculum. Schools can develop a "COVID-19 Broadband web page" on their division web site that lists businesses or organizations that offer free Wi-Fi to the community and how to obtain devices.

LOW-COST INTERNET SERVICE FOR STUDENTS OF FAMILIES THAT CANNOT AFFORD IT

Schools could fund strategies that help families understand how to fund their own low-cost Internet Services for the home. This could be a communication strategy or other creative means to assist families with the process of procuring this service.

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

VIRGINIA IS FOR LEARNERS

doe.virginia.gov

C4L CONTINUITY FOR LEARNING