



BENCHMARKING FLEXIBLE MASTER SCHEDULES WITH HYBRID COMPONENTS

June 2020

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
RECOMMENDATIONS	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.
KEY FINDINGS	4
SECTION I: HYBRID LEARNING IN SCHOOLS.....	6
Bronx Arena High School	6
Huntley High School.....	7
Spring City Elementary Hybrid Learning School	10
Taos Academy Charter School	11
Visalia Charter Independent Study	12
SECTION II: HYBRID LEARNING IN DISTRICTS.....	14
Downtown Area School District.....	14
Spokane Public Schools.....	16
Stamford Public Schools.....	18

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to influence school districts' decisions and potential solutions to providing continuous education during the upcoming academic year. As districts think ahead to 2020-2021, one potential solution is hybrid learning. This approach, also known as blended learning or mixed-mode learning, varies greatly depending on individual schools' implementation but, most importantly, includes a combination of in-person and online learning.¹ For additional background information on hybrid learning models, the impacts of hybrid learning, and general hybrid learning schedules, please log in to the Hanover Digital Library and click on the following link.

[Understanding Hybrid School Models and Unconventional School Structures](#)

To support districts considering a hybrid learning model, Hanover Research (Hanover) profiles eight schools and districts that currently follow a hybrid learning model. These schools and districts provide examples of flexible scheduling approaches and explain how schools structure a typical day or week using hybrid learning. Although district and schools may refer to hybrid learning in different ways (e.g., blended learning), this report uses the term *hybrid* throughout for consistency. Each subsection of this report profiles one of the schools or districts shown in Figure ES 1 and presents information on the hybrid model to the greatest extent possible, given the availability of publicly accessible information. This report categorizes profiles into two sections:

- **Section I: Hybrid Learning in Schools** profiles five schools. Profiles, appearing in alphabetical order, include 2018-2019 overview data as well as information on schools' flexible schedules and hybrid component(s); and
- **Section II: Hybrid Learning in Districts** profiles three districts that implement hybrid learning across multiple schools. Profiles, appearing in alphabetical order, include 2018-2019 overview data as well as information on districts' flexible schedules and hybrid component(s).

¹“Blended Learning.” The Glossary of Education Reform, Great Schools Partnership, August 29, 2013.
<https://www.edglossary.org/blended-learning/>

Figure ES 1: Profiled Schools and Districts

SCHOOL	DISTRICT OR ADMINISTRATIVE BODY	LOCATION
Schools Using Hybrid Learning		
Bronx Arena High School	New York City Department of Education and SCO Family of Services	Bronx, New York
Huntley High School	Huntley Community School District 158	Huntley, Illinois
Spring City Elementary Hybrid Learning School	Spring-Ford Area School District	Spring City, Pennsylvania (district office located in Royersford, Pennsylvania)
Taos Academy Charter School	Taos Academy Governing Council	Taos, New Mexico
Visalia Charter Independent Study	Visalia Unified School District	Visalia, California
Districts Using Hybrid Learning		
Downingtown East High School and Downingtown West High School	Downingtown Area School District	Downingtown, Pennsylvania
Cloonan Middle School, Dolan Middle School, Rippowam Middle School, Scofield Magnet Middle School, and Turn of River Middle School	Stamford Public Schools	Stamford, Connecticut

Source: Multiple sources cited throughout school profiles.

KEY FINDINGS



Highly flexible master schedules may only require students to attend school on certain days of the week. Because hybrid learning models involve a significant amount of individual online instruction and assignments, students may not need to be in a classroom to complete their work. Therefore, at Taos Academy Charter School, students in Grades 5-8 attend in-school classes on Mondays and Wednesdays, and students in Grades 9-12 attend in-school classes on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Additionally, in schools such as Huntley High School and Taos Academy Charter School, which do not require students to complete all work in a traditional classroom setting, attendance requirements may change based on student performance.



Schools establish flexible master schedules with hybrid learning models in high schools more often than middle or elementary schools. As shown by the schools and districts in the profiles below, six profiles present models for high schools, and three profiles present models for middle and elementary schools, with one profile supporting multiple grade levels. High schools that use hybrid components appear to give students more autonomy with their online learning compared to younger grade levels. For example, high school students may not need to attend an in-person class every day if they show acceptable academic performance. Conversely, elementary school students must attend classes but often work independently.



Traditional public schools, charter schools, and alternative education schools use flexible master schedules with hybrid learning models. A flexible approach supports multiple types of schools and students with a variety of learning needs. For example, On Track Academy follows a flexible master schedule with hybrid components to educate students in Grades 9-12 needing to recover credits. Similarly, Spring City Elementary Hybrid Learning School uses a flexible master schedule with hybrid components, though this school supports general education students in Grades K-4.



Flexible master schedules allow for multiple different forms of in-class hybrid learning. For example, middle school teachers in Spokane Public Schools use flipped classroom instruction,

station rotation activities, and optional and required seminars to engage in hybrid learning. Students participate in these activities during class or during “personal learning time,” which provides a high degree of flexibility and autonomy in a student’s day. At the elementary school level, Spring City Elementary Hybrid Learning School uses a station rotation approach, in which teachers work with students in small groups and others work independently or with each other.



Schools and districts typically offer hybrid learning courses for core subjects: English language arts, math, science, and social studies. For example, Spring City Elementary Hybrid Learning School and Taos Academy Charter School highlight that their hybrid models support students in these subject areas. Spokane Public School’s iCAN program also offers hybrid courses for core subjects but includes health and Spanish courses as well. When building master schedules, schools appear to divide time into blocks that account for in-person or hybrid core courses and in-person electives, such as dance and culinary courses at Visalia Charter Independent Study.



Schools and districts differ regarding how much time students spend on classroom instruction and online learning per course, but multiple profiled districts divide this time about equally. Figure ES 2 details how schools and districts allocate hybrid course time.

Figure ES 2: Hybrid Course Instructional Time

SCHOOL/DISTRICT	IN-CLASS INSTRUCTION	ONLINE INSTRUCTION
Bronx Arena High School ²	Four hours per day	One and a half hours per day
Huntley High School ³	Two to three periods per week	Two to three periods per week
Spring City Elementary Hybrid Learning School ⁴	40 minutes per subject per day (20 minutes for teacher-led instruction and small-group activities, each)	20 minutes per subject per day
Taos Academy Charter School ⁵	About 14 hours per week	About 20 hours per week
Visalia Charter Independent Study ⁶	One hour per week; two hours per week on one day for Biology, Chemistry, Forensics, Integrated Math, and Marine Biology	At least four hours per day
Downingtown Area School District ⁷	One, two, or three periods per week based on course rigor and credits	One, two, or three periods per week based on course rigor and credits
Spokane Public Schools	Not Available	Not Available
Stamford Public Schools	Not Available	Not Available

Source: Multiple sources cited within the figure.

² “Bronx Arena’s Master Schedule.” The Learning Accelerator. <https://practices.learningaccelerator.org/strategies/bronx-arenas-master-schedule>

³ “FAQs.” PowerSchool Learning. https://district158.learning.powerschool.com/skish/hhsblendedprogram/cms_page/view/10200481

⁴ [1] “Proof Points: Blended Learning Success in School Districts, Spring City Elementary Hybrid Learning School.” Evergreen Education Group, 2015. p. 1. <https://www.christenseninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Spring-City-Elementary-Hybrid-Learning-School.pdf> [2] “Spring City Elementary Hybrid School.” Clayton Christensen Institute. <https://www.christenseninstitute.org/spring-city-elementary-hybrid-school/>

⁵ [1] “Charter Summary.” p. 3. Downloaded from: http://taosacademy.ss5.sharpschool.com/about_us/what_we_stand_for [2] “Frequently Asked Questions.” Taos Academy Charter School. http://taosacademy.ss5.sharpschool.com/about_us/frequently_asked_questions [2] “Snapshot 2019: A Review of K-12 Online, Blended, and Digital Learning.” Digital Learning Collaborative, April 2019. p. 16. https://static1.squarespace.com/static/59381b9a17bffc68bf625df4/t/5cae3c05652dea4d690f5315/1554922508490/DLC-KP-Snapshot2019_040819.pdf

⁶ “Focus on Learning: Western Association of Schools and Colleges Self-Study Accreditation Report.” Visalia Charter Independent Study, March 2016. pp. 6, 48. <https://1.cdn.edl.io/W7eFikDMmU0TkO4ddjlrvs1WSmeBToUO42mdUpn7K1qrJDg3.pdf>

⁷ “High School Program of Study.” Downingtown Area School District, 2021 2020. <https://www.dasd.org/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=6195&dataid=24012&FileName=2020-2021%20POS%20E.W%20Final.pdf.1.9.20.pdf>

SECTION I: HYBRID LEARNING IN SCHOOLS

In this section, Hanover profiles five schools. Profiles, appearing in alphabetical order, include 2018-2019 overview data as well as information on schools' flexible schedules and hybrid component(s).

BRONX ARENA HIGH SCHOOL

Bronx Arena High School (Bronx Arena) supports over-aged secondary students with credit recovery and post-secondary preparation. The school, located in the Bronx, New York, operates through a partnership between the New York City Department of Education and SCO Family of Services.⁸ Figure 1.1 presents school data for the 2018-2019 school year, according to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).

Figure 1.1: Bronx Arena High School Overview

SCHOOL-LEVEL CHARACTERISTICS	SCHOOL-LEVEL DATA
Total Student Enrollment, All Grades, Including Adult Education (Enrollment)	144
Percent of Students on a Free and Reduced Price Lunch Plan (%FRPL)	89%
Percent of Non-White Students (%Non-White)	97%
Urban-Centric Locale	Large City
Pupil-to-Teacher Ratio	10.28

Source: National Center for Education Statistics⁹

HYBRID LEARNING SCHEDULE AND COMPONENTS

Students at Bronx Arena follow a flexible master schedule, which allows them to build student-teacher relationships while balancing project-based work, teacher-led instruction, and independent tasks. *Each day, students complete five main tasks, which vary in length and difficulty.* Although teachers may intervene when students do not complete their tasks, students hold responsibility for managing their time, ensuring that they complete daily tasks, and remaining on track to graduate. Meanwhile, teachers work with the same students until students graduate; work together to track student progress; meet with students to review credit plans; and instruct in class-wide, small-group, and individual settings.¹⁰ Figure 1.2 presents Bronx Arena's general master schedule.

⁸ "Mission." Bronx Arena High School. <http://www.bronxarena.org/information/mission.html>

⁹ Figure data obtained from: "Elementary and Secondary Information System." National Center for Education Statistics. <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/elsi/tableGenerator.aspx>

¹⁰ [1] "Bronx Arena's Master Schedule," Op. cit. [2] "Providing Productivity Guidance through Tasks and a Banking System." The Learning Accelerator. <https://practices.learningaccelerator.org/strategies/providing-productivity-guidance-through-tasks-and-a-banking-system>

Figure 1.2: Bronx Arena High School Schedule

TIME	DESCRIPTION
8:30 am-10:00 am	Learning Labs: Subject-focused courses that allow students the ability to engage and apply curriculum in new ways through two challenges and a capstone project. Students finish courses after completing all of the necessary work, which can happen over a variable amount of time. They start a new Learning Lab immediately after completing the previous one.
10:00 am-12:00 pm	Arena Time: Students work with their generalist teacher, Advocate Counselor, and content specialists (through pull-out and push-in opportunities) on their long-term plan, their focus and backup credits, and specific daily tasks.
12:00 pm-12:30 pm	Lunch
12:30pm-2:30pm	Arena Time: Same as above to continue progress with tasks and activities for the day.

Source: The Learning Accelerator¹¹

To support each student and their individual needs, Bronx Arena relies on technology and hybrid learning. The school uses a “custom learning management system, as well as a custom curriculum, to create an environment where every student can work on a different course at the same time.”¹² Therefore, the school has a one-to-one student-to-device ratio. Bronx Arena’s flexible schedule and structure also allow students to change the order of courses and when they fulfill graduation requirements based on progress, interests, and subject mastery.¹³

HUNTLEY HIGH SCHOOL

Huntley High School (HHS) supports students in Grades 9-12, and about half of these students take part in the Alpha Courses Blended Learning program. The school, located in Huntley, Illinois, operates within the Huntley Community School District 158.¹⁴ Figure 1.3 presents school data, and Figure 1.4 presents district data for the 2018-2019 school year, according to NCES.

Figure 1.3: Huntley High School Overview

SCHOOL-LEVEL CHARACTERISTICS	SCHOOL-LEVEL DATA
Enrollment	3,082
%FRPL	11%
%Non-White	26%
Urban-Centric Locale	Large Suburb
Pupil-to-Teacher Ratio	17.22

Source: National Center for Education Statistics¹⁵

Figure 1.4: Huntley Community School District 158 Overview

DISTRICT-LEVEL CHARACTERISTICS	DISTRICT-LEVEL DATA
Enrollment	9,319
%FRPL	13%
Percent of Students with an Individualized Education Plan (%IEP)	13%
Percent of English Language Learners (%ELL)	4%

¹¹ Figure text reproduced nearly verbatim from: “Bronx Arena’s Master Schedule,” Op. cit.

¹² “Bronx Arena High School.” The Learning Accelerator. <https://practices.learningaccelerator.org/see/bronx-arena>

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ “About.” Huntley High School, November 13, 2014. <http://www.district158.org/hhs/about/>

¹⁵ Figure data obtained from: “Elementary and Secondary Information System,” Op. cit.

DISTRICT-LEVEL CHARACTERISTICS	DISTRICT-LEVEL DATA
%Non-White	26%
Urban-Centric Locale	Large Suburb
Pupil-to-Teacher Ratio	15.81

Source: National Center for Education Statistics¹⁶

HYBRID LEARNING SCHEDULE AND COMPONENTS

Hybrid learning significantly factors into instruction at HHS as it's Alpha Courses Blended Learning program began in 2011 with 100 students and continues to grow upward of 2,100 students and 70 teachers.¹⁷ This hybrid learning model, which relies heavily on students to manage time and assignments, allows students to work quickly through material they understand and allows teachers to support students on a more individual basis.¹⁸ As a general weekly schedule, *students enrolled in a hybrid learning course meet as a class two or three times per week*. Because HHS follows a block- or period-based schedule, a hybrid course fits into a period just as traditional courses do. The school bell schedule determines when the in-person meetings take place, and on days without meetings, students may use the same period for online assignments. However, HHS resources do not clarify if the periods rotate.¹⁹ Figure 1.5 presents the HHS bell schedule.

Figure 1.5: Huntley High School Bell Schedule

PERIOD	TIME
Period 1	7:30 am–8:17 am
Period 2	8:22 am–9:09 am
Period 3	9:14 am–10:06 am
Period 4*	10:11 am–10:58 am
Period 5*	11:03 am–11:50 am
Period 6*	11:55 am–12:42 pm
Period 7	12:47 pm–1:34 pm
Period 8	1:39 pm–2:26 pm

*Note: Students go to lunch during one of six lunchtimes during these periods.

Source: Huntley High School²⁰

When not meeting, students can choose how to use the time allocated to this course. Common uses include:²¹

- Working online;
- Meeting individually or in small groups with the teacher;
- Working ahead or catching up in that or other courses;
- Leaving campus; and
- Napping.

¹⁶ Figure data obtained from: Ibid.

¹⁷ "Huntley High School Ranked #1 in U.S. for Blended Learning by Study.Com." Huntley Community School District 158, April 17, 2019. <http://www.district158.org/blog/2019/04/17/huntley-high-school-ranked-1-in-u-s-for-blended-learning-by-study-com/>

¹⁸ "About," Op. cit.

¹⁹ [1] "Daily Bell Schedule." Huntley High School, September 2, 2015. <http://www.district158.org/hhs/about/daily-bell-schedule/> [2] "FAQs," Op. cit.

²⁰ Figure reproduced nearly verbatim from: "Daily Bell Schedule," Op. cit.








²¹ Bulleted text reproduced nearly verbatim from: "Huntley High School Ranked #1 in U.S. for Blended Learning by Study.Com," Op. cit.

Additionally, HHS resources outline how the school holds hybrid learning students accountable for attendance and participation. Individual hybrid learning teachers can track how long students spend on each assignment.²² Additionally, guidelines include:²³

- Students are responsible for knowing which days are in class and which are blended;
- At a minimum, students must attend class every day when their grade falls below 70% in the course. Teachers may also stipulate additional parameters for blended attendance and outline those expectations in the course syllabus provided at the start of the course;
- If the student is required to be in class, and they do not attend, the teacher marks them UNVBL. Students are aware of when they are required to be in class;
- If the student is not required to be in class that day, the teacher will mark their attendance BLENDED; and
- The Dean's office then initiates disciplinary action according to HHS school policy.

Furthermore, **HHS received recognition as the top hybrid learning program in the United States in 2019 by Study.com.**²⁴ Study.com highlights HHS's hybrid learning program for its popularity and student-driven structure.²⁵ HHS also received recognition in 2014 by the Illinois Association of School Business Officials (Illinois ASBO), which included an article on HHS's program in one of the organization's [publications](#).²⁶ This article on HHS's hybrid learning program, though written by HHS staff, contains the program's impact and lessons learned. The article includes nine elements that support hybrid learning program implementation, which appear in Figure 1.6.²⁷

Figure 1.6: Nine Components for Implementing a Hybrid Learning Program

	Create a vision firmly rooted in the educational mission and vision of the district
	Approach staffing the same way you staff traditional brick-and-mortar classes
	Identify leadership at all levels in the organization to take part in planning and implementing the program
	Make a funding commitment to the program's success using stable funding sources
	Determine your district infrastructure needs and what resources are at your disposal
	Clearly articulate program goals, potential gains for students and challenges they might face
	Understand and follow the framework outlined in Illinois School Code

²² [1] Valencia, N. "Blended Learning Allows Flexible Schedules for Students." CNN, April 7, 2015. <https://www.cnn.com/2015/04/07/living/blended-learning-education/index.html> [2] "Attendance." PowerSchool Learning. https://district158.learning.powerschool.com/skish/hhsblendedprogram/cms_page/view/10200479



²³ Bulleted text reproduced nearly verbatim from: "Attendance," Op. cit.

²⁴ [1] "Huntley High School Ranked #1 in U.S. for Blended Learning by Study.Com," Op. cit. [2] Burkhart, M. and E. Schlichter. "Finding the Right Mix." *UPDATE: Indispensable Tool for School Business Management*. https://issuu.com/illinois_asbo/docs/win_2014_update

²⁵ "Top 50 Blended Learning High Schools." Study.Com, February 7, 2019. <https://study.com/academy/popular/top-50-blended-learning-high-schools.html>

²⁶ Burkhart and Schlichter, Op. cit.

²⁷ Ibid., pp. 14–17.

	If internal resources allow, build online content internally in lieu of purchasing externally
	Remember that all the hard work is worth the effort

Source: Illinois Association of School Business Officials²⁸

SPRING CITY ELEMENTARY HYBRID LEARNING SCHOOL

Spring City Elementary Hybrid Learning School (Spring City) supports students in Grades K-4 through an **entirely hybrid instructional approach**.²⁹ The school, located in Spring City, Pennsylvania, operates within the Spring-Ford Area School District.³⁰ Figure 1.7 presents school data, and Figure 1.8 presents district data for the 2018-2019 school year, according to NCES.

Figure 1.7: Spring City Elementary Hybrid Learning School Overview

SCHOOL-LEVEL CHARACTERISTICS	SCHOOL-LEVEL DATA
Enrollment	143
%FRPL	40%
%Non-White	25%
Urban-Centric Locale	Large Suburb
Pupil-to-Teacher Ratio	13.62

Source: National Center for Education Statistics³¹

Figure 1.8: Spring-Ford Area School District Overview

DISTRICT-LEVEL CHARACTERISTICS	DISTRICT-LEVEL DATA
Enrollment	7,954
%FRPL	15%
%IEP	19%
%ELL	1%
%Non-White	23%
Urban-Centric Locale	Large Suburb
Pupil-to-Teacher Ratio	13.75

Source: National Center for Education Statistics³²

HYBRID LEARNING SCHEDULE AND COMPONENTS

Hybrid learning at Spring City follows a station rotation model, in which students rotate between three stations (i.e., teacher instruction, independent or small-group work, online learning). About 80 percent of classroom instruction follows this model, and all students and teachers in the school learn and instruct using this approach. While students hold responsibility for pacing and managing much of their online learning, teachers manage direct instruction, design small groups and activities, and give online assignments.³³

²⁸ Figure text reproduced verbatim from: Ibid., pp. 15–17.

²⁹ “Proof Points: Blended Learning Success in School Districts, Spring City Elementary Hybrid Learning School,” Op. cit., p. 1.

³⁰ “Spring City Elementary Hybrid Learning School.” Spring-Ford Area School District. <https://www.spring-ford.net/our-schools/spring-city-hybrid-learning-school>

³¹ Figure data obtained from: “Elementary and Secondary Information System,” Op. cit.

³² Figure data obtained from: Ibid.

³³ “Spring City Elementary Hybrid School,” Op. cit.

The hybrid learning model at Spring City applies to all core subjects: English language arts (ELA), math, science, and social studies. *Students spend 20 minutes at each station, and once students cycle through each station, the class changes subjects.*³⁴ Through this model, Spring City aims to attain the goals and aspects of hybrid learning shown in Figure 1.9.

Figure 1.9: Hybrid Learning Vision and Features

VISION	KEY FEATURES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To explore an educational structure (specific to elementary level) that moves beyond the four walls of the current elementary classroom to that of a truly global 21st-century learning environment ▪ To allow teachers and students to explore new methods of instructional pedagogy and learning while simultaneously building a foundation that leads directly to college and career readiness in the 21st century ▪ To provide high-quality professional development for not only the staff but also for the students ▪ To incorporate ongoing assessments of progress to ensure that students are progressing appropriately ▪ To reshape the way that we view pedagogy and education (as a whole) at the elementary level, for tomorrow and beyond 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Technology enables customized learning ▪ Assessments occur daily with regular reports and data inform instruction ▪ Students receive the same material different ways to accommodate distinct learning styles ▪ Teachers instruct in small groups ▪ Education occurs primarily at school ▪ Entire schools or subsets (e.g., classes, grades, sections) may use the approach

Source: Spring-Ford Area School District³⁵

TAOS ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL

Taos Academy Charter School (Taos Academy) supports students in Grades 5-12 and uses a hybrid learning model explicitly.³⁶ The school, located in the Taos, New Mexico, operates under the Taos Academy Governing Council as a state-chartered school.³⁷ Figure 1.10 presents school data for the 2018-2019 school year, according to NCES.

Figure 1.10: Taos Academy Charter School Overview

SCHOOL-LEVEL CHARACTERISTICS	SCHOOL-LEVEL DATA
Enrollment	215
%FRPL	56%
%Non-White	55%
Urban-Centric Locale	Remote Town
Pupil-to-Teacher Ratio	12.22

Source: National Center for Education Statistics³⁸

³⁴ "Proof Points: Blended Learning Success in School Districts, Spring City Elementary Hybrid Learning School," Op. cit., pp. 1-2.

³⁵ Figure text reproduced nearly verbatim from: "Hybrid Learning." Spring-Ford Area School District. <https://www.spring-ford.net/about-spring-ford/curriculum-instruction/elementary-school-academics/hybrid-learning>

³⁶ "Frequently Asked Questions," Op. cit.

³⁷ [1] "Mission, Vision and Charter." Taos Academy Charter School.

http://taosacademy.ss5.sharpschool.com/about_us/what_we_stand_for [2] "Snapshot 2019: A Review of K-12 Online, Blended, and Digital Learning," Op. cit., p. 16.

³⁸ Figure data obtained from: "Elementary and Secondary Information System," Op. cit.

HYBRID LEARNING SCHEDULE AND COMPONENTS

At Taos Academy, schedules and attendance needs vary from student to student and depend on decisions made by instructional advisors. Taos Academy operates using a master schedule where *students in Grades 5-8 attend the school on Mondays and Wednesdays, and students in Grades 9-12 attend on Tuesdays and Thursdays*. Additionally, all students attend school from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm on their assigned days and can use the Student Success Lab from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm on days that they do not have to attend.³⁹ Figure 1.11 presents an example of a typical Monday through Thursday schedule.

Figure 1.11: Example Schedule at Taos Academy Charter School

DAY/TIME	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
Grade Level	Grades 5-8 Only	Grades 9-12 Only	Grades 5-8 Only	Grades 9-12 Only
8:00 am-12:00 pm	Online Academic Classes/Academic Enrichment Classes	Online Academic Classes/Academic Enrichment Classes	Online Academic Classes/Academic Enrichment Classes	Online Academic Classes/Academic Enrichment Classes
12:00 pm-1:00 pm	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
1:00 pm-3:00 pm	21st Century Learning	21st Century Learning	21st Century Learning	21st Century Learning
3:00 pm-4:00 pm	Electives	Electives	Electives	Electives

Source: Taos Academy Charter School⁴⁰

Academic classes include ELA, math, science, and social studies, and all include both online and in-class instruction. The online portion of these core courses typically includes about 20 hours of work each week, which academic advisors review.⁴¹ These advisors also support students in the following ways:⁴²

- Goal setting;
- Progress tracking; and
- Developing individualized learning pathways that reflect students' passions and interests.

Additionally, to ensure that students remain focused and on track in their studies, Taos Academy maintains policies to inform parents of and hold students accountable for student performance. For example, students who fall behind or have less than a 70 percent grade average must agree to a "Student Success Contract."⁴³ This contract represents a combined effort between the student, teacher, and parents to ensure students improve their performance in 30 days. During the 30 days, students must work with teachers on goal setting, time management, and work habits as well as physically attend Taos Academy five days per week.⁴⁴

VISALIA CHARTER INDEPENDENT STUDY

Visalia Charter Independent Study (VCIS) supports students in Grades 9-12 through hybrid and fully online instructional models. The school, located in Visalia, California, operates within Visalia Unified School District (VUSD) and allows students to easily transition between online programs, hybrid programs, and traditional classroom education. Students often enroll in VCIS for credit recovery, acceleration, or social-emotional

³⁹ "Frequently Asked Questions," Op. cit.

⁴⁰ Figure reproduced verbatim with modifications from: Ibid.

⁴¹ "Snapshot 2019: A Review of K-12 Online, Blended, and Digital Learning," Op. cit., p. 16.

⁴² Bulleted text reproduced verbatim from: Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

needs.⁴⁵ Figure 1.12 presents school data, and Figure 1.13 presents district data for the 2018-2019 school year, according to NCES.

Figure 1.12: Visalia Charter Independent Study Overview

SCHOOL-LEVEL CHARACTERISTICS	SCHOOL-LEVEL DATA
Enrollment	546
%FRPL	70%
%Non-White	77%
Urban-Centric Locale	Mid-Size City
Pupil-to-Teacher Ratio	10.03

Source: National Center for Education Statistics⁴⁶

Figure 1.13: Visalia Unified School District Overview

DISTRICT-LEVEL CHARACTERISTICS	DISTRICT-LEVEL DATA
Enrollment	29,107
%FRPL	68%
%IEP	10%
%ELL	15%
%Non-White	80%
Urban-Centric Locale	Mid-Size City
Pupil-to-Teacher Ratio	23.83

Source: National Center for Education Statistics⁴⁷

HYBRID LEARNING SCHEDULE AND COMPONENTS

Students can take VCIS courses completely online, though many core and elective courses run as in-person classes, and students may take courses that follow a combination of instructional approaches. However, students taking a course online must still meet with an advising teacher once per week. Additionally, students do not enroll in VCIS courses while enrolled at another VUSD school, but “courses that are not offered at VCIS and are available at other VUSD high schools may be taken upon administrative approval.”⁴⁸ *This combination of online VCIS, in-person VCIS, and in-person traditional VUSD course flexibility allows students and teachers to design an appropriate educational plan to meet individual needs.*

Master schedules created by VCIS illustrate the block-like structure used throughout the school. However, the degree to which students engage in online and in-person courses impacts when students learn in a classroom or online. These master schedules, organized by subject area, are available through the VCIS Western Association of Schools and Colleges Self-Study Accreditation Report. For example, [this report](#) from 2016 contains the in-person courses available (e.g., geometry, basic culinary, team dance) and shows when they run.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ [1] “About Our School.” Visalia Charter Independent Study.

https://www.vciseagles.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=269942&type=d&pREC_ID=601019 [2] “Focus on Learning: Western Association of Schools and Colleges Self-Study Accreditation Report,” Op. cit., pp. 10, 14.

⁴⁶ Figure data obtained from: “Elementary and Secondary Information System,” Op. cit.

⁴⁷ Figure data obtained from: Ibid.

⁴⁸ “Frequently Asked Questions.” Visalia Charter Independent Study.

https://www.vciseagles.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=269942&type=d&pREC_ID=601108

⁴⁹ “Snapshot 2019: A Review of K-12 Online, Blended, and Digital Learning,” Op. cit., pp. 252–258.

SECTION II: HYBRID LEARNING IN DISTRICTS

In this section, Hanover profiles three districts that implement hybrid learning across multiple schools. Profiles, appearing in alphabetical order, include 2018-2019 overview data as well as information on districts' flexible schedules and hybrid component(s).

DOWNINGTOWN AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Downingtown Area School District (DASD), located in Downingtown, Pennsylvania, educates about 13,000 students from eight municipalities. **This public school district offers in-class, online, and hybrid courses, though only students in Grades 9-12 may take hybrid courses.**⁵⁰ Figure 2.1 presents district data for the 2018-2019 school year, according to NCES.

Figure 2.1: Downingtown Area School District Overview

DISTRICT-LEVEL CHARACTERISTICS	DISTRICT-LEVEL DATA
Enrollment	12,938
%FRPL	10%
%IEP	18%
%ELL	1%
%Non-White	25%
Urban-Centric Locale	Large Suburb
Pupil-to-Teacher Ratio	14.46

Source: National Center for Education Statistics⁵¹

HYBRID LEARNING SCHEDULE AND COMPONENTS

Hybrid learning at DASD operates very similarly to in-class learning, as students receive instruction from DASD teachers, have some in-person experience, and engage in mid-year and final exams. However, hybrid learning courses typically “*meet in person only two days out of [the standard DASD] six-day cycle, and during the remaining four days, students would be able to work asynchronously online on their own.*”⁵² Depending on a hybrid course's rigor and the number of credits, the course may require more or fewer in-person and online meetings. Figure 2.2 presents the bell schedule, which shows the length of each period. Additionally, students may meet with teachers on days without in-person meetings for extra support.⁵³

Figure 2.2: Downingtown High School East and West Bell Schedule

PERIOD	TIME
Period 1	7:40 am-8:36 am
Period 2	8:40 am-9:28 am
Period 3	9:32 am-10:20 am
Period 4*	10:24 am-11:12 am
Period 5*	11:16 am-12:04 pm

⁵⁰ [1] “Downingtown Area School District Overview.” Downingtown Area School District. <https://www.dasd.org/Page/9003> [2] “Municipalities.” Downingtown Area School District. <https://www.dasd.org/Page/4449> [3] “What Is the Difference between a Blended Class and a Cyber Class?” Downingtown Area School District. <https://www.dasd.org/Page/2221>

⁵¹ Figure data obtained from: “Elementary and Secondary Information System,” Op. cit.

⁵² Kim, J.J.-H. and R. Melikan. “Launching Blended Learning In Downingtown Area School District (PA).” District Management Group. <https://dmj.dmgrouppk12.com/article/Launching+Blended+Learning+In+Downingtown+Area+School+District+%28PA%29/3377341/586989/article.html>

⁵³ Ibid.







PERIOD	TIME
Period 6*	12:08 pm-12:56 pm
Period 7*	1:00 pm-1:48 pm
Period 8	1:52 pm-2:40 pm

*Note: Students go to lunch during one of four lunchtimes during these periods.

Source: Downingtown Area School District⁵⁴

Although HHS received recognition as the top hybrid learning program in the United States, **Downingtown High School East (DHS East) ranks fourth on Study.com's 2019 "Top 50 Learning High Schools" list.**⁵⁵ Study.com recognizes DHS East's hybrid model for its number of courses and flexibility for allowing students to take traditional, hybrid, and online courses.⁵⁶ Additionally, District Management Group highlights the lessons learned and key components of DASD's hybrid learning program, which contribute to its success. These components appear in Figure 2.3, and District Management Group's complete case study of DASD's program is available [here](#).⁵⁷

Figure 2.3: Hybrid Learning Program Key Lessons and Components

	Employ a skilled and talented project leader
	Develop the hybrid learning model separately from existing programs and faculty
	Allow students and teachers to opt in to enrolling in and teaching hybrid courses to gain support
	Develop parent and teacher buy-in through information and communication
	Ensure district leaders demonstrate strong and continued support for the model
	Allow for development, innovation, and modification of the hybrid model

Source: District Management Group⁵⁸

As indicated above, DASD offers both hybrid and fully online—cyber—courses. Although both models incorporate technology-based learning, student-teacher interaction and student eligibility represent key differences between the two approaches.⁵⁹ DASD compares these approaches through the bullet points contained in Figure 2.4.

⁵⁴ Figure reproduced nearly verbatim from: [1] "Downingtown High School East Campus Bell Schedule." Downingtown Area School District. p. 1.

<https://www.dasd.org/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=5857&dataid=18109&FileName=DE%20Bell%20Schedules.pdf> [2] "2019-2020 Bell Schedule Downingtown High School West Campus." Downingtown Area School District. p. 1.

<https://www.dasd.org/Page/4533>

⁵⁵ "Top 50 Blended Learning High Schools," Op. cit.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 50.

⁵⁷ Kim and Melikan, Op. cit.

⁵⁸ Figure adapted from: Ibid.

⁵⁹ "What Is the Difference between a Blended Class and a Cyber Class?" Op. cit.

Figure 2.4: Comparison of Hybrid and Cyber Courses

HYBRID MODEL	BOTH MODELS	CYBER MODEL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students and teachers meet two or three times per week Students learn and complete assignments through Schoology when not meeting The hybrid course schedule aligns with a typical in-class course schedule Students in Grades 9-12 may enroll 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hybrid and cyber courses follow the DASD-approved curriculum that in-person courses use, including Advanced Placement and honors courses Most courses receive NCAA approval Students typically receive assignments weekly All courses are free for students in DASD Students may also enroll in traditional courses Students may participate in extra-curricular activities All courses may contribute to graduation requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students and teachers never meet in person All assignments and interactions (e.g., virtual meetings) occur online Students in Grades K-12 may enroll Students pace themselves throughout the courses

Source: Downtown Area School District⁶⁰

SPOKANE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Fifteen public schools, the Individual Credit Advancement Now (iCAN) program, and On Track Academy, an alternative school for credit recovery, use hybrid learning to support college and career readiness. These schools and programs operate within Spokane Public Schools (Spokane) in Spokane, Washington.⁶¹ Figure 2.5 presents district data for the 2018-2019 school year, according to NCES.

Figure 2.5: Spokane Public Schools Overview

DISTRICT-LEVEL CHARACTERISTICS	DISTRICT-LEVEL DATA
Enrollment	30,231
%FRPL	59%
%IEP	16%
%ELL	7%
%Non-White	33%
Urban-Centric Locale	Mid-Size City
Pupil-to-Teacher Ratio	15.80

Source: National Center for Education Statistics⁶²

HYBRID LEARNING SCHEDULE AND COMPONENTS

Spokane's hybrid learning opportunities use in-person and online resources to support students behind on credits, in need of extra support, looking for more challenging material, and interested in having more autonomy in their education. *For regular education students taking hybrid courses, hybrid learning may include flipped classroom, station rotation, and optional seminar components during class time and "personal learning time."*⁶³

⁶⁰ Figure adapted from: Ibid.

⁶¹ "Proof Points: Blended Learning Success in School Districts, Spokane Public Schools." Evergreen Education Group, 2015. p. 1. <https://www.christenseninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Spokane-Public-Schools.pdf>

⁶² Figure data obtained from: "Elementary and Secondary Information System," Op. cit.

⁶³ [1] "Proof Points: Blended Learning Success in School Districts, Spokane Public Schools," Op. cit., p. 1. [2] "Blended Learning." Spokane Public Schools. <https://www.spokaneschools.org/Page/2570>

Middle school students may receive pacing guides, which keep them on track with their independent work but also allow them to look ahead and begin learning new concepts. Students needing extra support can receive individual instruction from their teacher while other students work on their computers.⁶⁴ Furthermore, **students looking for additional support or a space to work may visit Student Support Labs, located in schools and community libraries.**⁶⁵ The schedule for these labs appears in Figure 2.6.

Figure 2.6: Student Support Lab Schedule, 2019-2020

DAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
Location	Shadle High School	Hillyard Public Library	South Hill Public Library	Shadle High School
Hours	3:00 pm-5:30 pm	12:00 pm-1:30 pm	2:30 pm-5:30 pm	3:00 pm-5:30 pm
Extra Support Subject (Hours)	ELA (3:00 pm-4:00 pm)	Math (12:00 pm-1:30 pm)	Not Available	Math (3:00 pm-4:00 pm)

Source: Spokane Public Schools⁶⁶

Additionally, middle and high school students enrolled in the iCAN program take courses for six to eight weeks, on average. These courses allow students to filter through course content up to the point where they need greater support, and course completion leads to credit recovery. Students also have designated times to meet with a classroom teacher for support. However, Spokane does not present a master schedule to illustrate how students engage in these meetings and other learning activities.⁶⁷ Figure 2.7 presents additional details—supports and courses—for the iCAN program.

Figure 2.7: iCAN Program Supports and Courses

SUPPORTS	COURSES AVAILABLE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ iCAN students have classtime scheduled with an iCAN classroom teacher who is their educational and personal support advocate ▪ iCAN students work with online teachers who are their academic content specialist ▪ iCAN students can access their coursework from a computer anytime, any place ▪ iCAN student progress and teacher contact is tracked in an electronic system to make sure the student's teachers and counselors know how to best support the student 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ English 9 ▪ English 10 ▪ English 11 ▪ English 12 ▪ Algebra 1 ▪ Geometry ▪ Algebra 2 ▪ Pre-Calculus ▪ Biology ▪ Chemistry ▪ Physics ▪ Anatomy & Physiology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ World History ▪ US History ▪ Civics ▪ Current World Affairs ▪ Health ▪ Intro to Fitness ▪ Lifetime Fitness ▪ Spanish 1 ▪ Spanish 2

Source: Spokane Public Schools⁶⁸

⁶⁴ "Blended Learning." Op. cit.

⁶⁵ "Spokane Virtual and Blended Learning, 2019-2020 Student Support Labs." Spokane Public Schools, December 12, 2019. https://www.spokaneschools.org/cms/lib/WA50000187/Centricity/Domain/1796/Student%20Support%20Labs%202019-2020_Updated_Shadle.pdf

⁶⁶ Figure adapted from: Ibid.

⁶⁷ "iCAN Programs." Spokane Public Schools. <https://www.spokaneschools.org/Page/2141>

⁶⁸ Figure text reproduced verbatim from: Ibid.

Regarding On Track Academy, students enrolled experience individualized alternative education for credit recovery and college and career preparation.⁶⁹ On Track Academy allows students to regain credits, master content at an accelerated rate, and gain skills through the NEWTECH Skill Center. This center operates next to On Track Academy, and students follow a schedule that allows them to learn at the Skill Center, at On Track Academy, and online.⁷⁰

STAMFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Stamford Public Schools (Stamford) recently restructured its middle school master schedule, curriculum, and teacher supports to better align with student and staff needs. The district, located in the Stamford, Connecticut, operates five middle schools among about 25 schools and education programs.⁷¹ Figure 2.8 presents district data for the 2018-2019 school year, according to NCES.

Figure 2.8: Stamford Public Schools Overview





DISTRICT-LEVEL CHARACTERISTICS	DISTRICT-LEVEL DATA
Enrollment	15,942
%FRPL	57%
%IEP	14%
%ELL	13%
%Non-White	67%
Urban-Centric Locale	Mid-Size City
Pupil-to-Teacher Ratio	12.33

Source: National Center for Education Statistics⁷²

HYBRID LEARNING SCHEDULE AND COMPONENTS

Stamford redesigned its middle school learning structure between 2016 and 2018, which prioritized creating a more flexible master schedule, increasing student voice, adding a student advisory program, and establishing collaborative teaching teams.⁷³ To implement the three-phase redesign plan, *Stamford focused on creating a flexible master schedule using the reasons shown in Figure 2.9.*

Figure 2.9: Flexible Master Schedule Initiatives

	Flex scheduling builds regular time into the school day for student support and enrichment that does not interfere with regular classes
	Flex scheduling allows for personalization, targeted intervention, and opportunities for student voice and choice
	Flex scheduling offers staff the opportunity to connect more deeply with students by teaching topics that are of personal interest
	Flex scheduling allows students to have more enrichment experiences (e.g., Lego robotics, debate, chess, power walking, social-emotional counseling)

Source: Miami-Dade County Public Schools⁷⁴

⁶⁹ "Proof Points: Blended Learning Success in School Districts, Spokane Public Schools," Op. cit., p. 2.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ "Stamford Public Schools." Stamford Public Schools. <https://www.stamfordpublicschools.org/>

⁷² Figure data obtained from: "Elementary and Secondary Information System," Op. cit.





⁷³ Blazer, C. "Middle School Redesign." Miami-Dade County Public Schools, October 2018. p. 8.

<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED593762.pdf>

⁷⁴ Figure text reproduced verbatim with modifications from: Ibid., p. 9.

In addition to master schedule changes, Stamford focused on curriculum developments and teacher training. Stamford highlights a more personalized and hybrid approach in its redesign plan, particularly the changes in Figure 2.10.⁷⁵

Figure 2.10: Instructional and Curricular Changes Made During Middle School Redesign

	Adding a technology course (e.g., coding, Design Thinking) to the curriculum requirements
	Increasing opportunities for hybrid learning and personalization to students
	Integrating International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) standards into the curriculum
	Strengthening math intervention through the Math 180 intervention program

Source: Miami-Dade County Public Schools⁷⁶

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Figure text reproduced verbatim with modifications from: Ibid.

ABOUT HANOVER RESEARCH

Hanover Research provides high-quality, custom research and analytics through a cost-effective model that helps clients make informed decisions, identify and seize opportunities, and heighten their effectiveness.

OUR SOLUTIONS

ACADEMIC SOLUTIONS

- **College & Career Readiness:**
Support on-time student graduation and prepare all students for post-secondary education and careers.
- **Program Evaluation:**
Measure program impact to support informed, evidence-based investments in resources that maximize student outcomes and manage costs.
- **Safe & Supportive Environments:**
Create an environment that supports the academic, cultural, and social-emotional needs of students, parents, and staff through a comprehensive annual assessment of climate and culture.

ADMINISTRATIVE SOLUTIONS

- **Family and Community Engagement:**
Expand and strengthen family and community relationships and identify community partnerships that support student success.
- **Talent Recruitment, Retention & Development:**
Attract and retain the best staff through an enhanced understanding of the teacher experience and staff professional development needs.
- **Operations Improvement:**
Proactively address changes in demographics, enrollment levels, and community expectations in your budgeting decisions.

LEADERSHIP SOLUTION

Build a high-performing administration that is the first choice for students, parents, and staff.

OUR BENEFITS



EXPERT

200+ analysts with multiple methodology research expertise



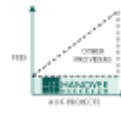
FLEXIBLE

Ongoing custom research agenda adapts with organizations' needs



DEDICATED

Exclusive account and research teams ensure strategic partnership



EFFICIENT

Annual, fixed-fee model shares costs and benefits



www.hanoverresearch.com