

Oklahoma State Department of Education
OK to LEARN Abstract

According to the criteria from the U.S. Department of Education, Oklahoma ranks in the 61st to 80th percentile category based on the four factors equally weighted to determine program eligibility. The Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) is applying for funds to implement the **OK to Learn** project addressing Absolute Priority 3 – Field-based projects for educational models for remote learning to improve student outcomes. The COVID-19 pandemic has shuttered schools in Oklahoma, upending traditional approaches to education. The health threats posed by the Coronavirus, a sudden shift to remote teaching and added caretaking responsibilities at home have created a uniquely stressful and demanding context for teachers' work. Major concerns were expressed by Oklahoma teachers in a recent survey (*April 2020*), concerning their wellbeing during the pandemic and their ability to successfully deliver remote instruction. Teachers have also expressed apprehension about their willingness to return to the classroom when schools are able to reopen. Even more troubling are projections of substantial student learning loss and the likelihood that differential access to technology and learning supports at home are exacerbating longstanding achievement gaps along racial and socio-economic lines. To combat these fears and to arm Oklahoma teachers with the tools they need to be successful in these unprecedented times, the **OK to Learn** project will seek to achieve the following objectives: providing distance learning professional development for teachers, including a focus on performance-based assessments; providing student academic and social emotional support through blended learning opportunities; and creating a Parent-Pro program to build the skills of parents to become para-professionals in the schools leading to an increased Oklahoma teacher workforce.