In the move to remote teaching, Ellie wanted to continue with certain practices she had started in the fall, and to provide her students with routines that enabled continuity from the classroom. Ellie felt that familiarity and routine would help students engage while in this new mode of learning.

How did Ellie engage her students in the virtual classroom?

In collaboration with the teachers in her department, the learning specialists within her school network, and the school counselors, Ellie created documents for her students that listed all assignments due in a particular week. These documents were a one-stop shop for all assignments with links that provided a way for the teacher, counselor, and parents to be on the same page and to advocate for their students.

“The counselors were very appreciative of it [the student assignment document] because it helped them to help the students. And even the parents who saw the document, they were grateful for it as well because everything that they needed was in one place.”

To create student assignment documents try following these two pieces of advice:

1. Create interdisciplinary tasks. It is a challenge to come up with how much to assign students since their situations are unique. One way around the challenge of assigning students too much is to work across departments and get creative with what you task students to do. Keep the mantra in mind - Less is more!

2. Teamwork makes the dream work. Ellie’s planning effectively engaged students because all stakeholders had consistent and common information. By bringing together teachers, learning specialists, and school counselors, she was able to holistically understand students better and leverage their relationships with students.

“There was a student that when we were face-to-face had poor work habits. But in the spring, he was one of the most engaged students! A 180-degree turn around and he would be the only student for my office hours.”

Learn more at MathForAmerica.org/RemoteTeaching