



Enriched Virtual Model

In the enriched virtual model, all students in the school divide time for every course between school and home. It differs from the flex model because students do not attend the physical school every day.

Rio Rancho Cyber Academy, part of Rio Rancho Public Schools in New Mexico, opened in 2005 and enrolls about 180 students in grades six through 12. Students in grades six through eight come to school Monday, Wednesday and Friday morning, while grades nine through 11 come in Tuesday and Thursday. Seniors come in only on Tuesdays. Students spend the other days at home working on online courses.

The school is essentially a large, one-room computer lab, with some offices and conference spaces. When students are in the school, instruction is focused on the concepts with which they are struggling. The school's eight teachers can work with students individually or in small groups. Teachers also focus on skills, like writing and note-taking, that are necessary across all subjects with online curriculum.

The academy's ACT scores exceed state and national averages, says Heidi Parnell, Rio Rancho Cyber Academy program manager and the district's virtual enriched learning coordinator. The average composite score for the class of 2013 was 22 out of 36, compared to about 20 statewide. The students also outperform state averages on the New Mexico Standards Based Assessment. Most notably, in 2012, 95 percent of seventh grade Cyber Academy students passed the state's standardized math test, compared to 42 percent statewide.