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MARYLAND TOGETHER

MARYLAND RECOVERY PLAN FOR EDUCATION

RESPONSE TO COVID-19 AND A PATHWAY FORWARD



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MESSAGE FROM THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Better Together. Maryland's Recovery.

Following my announcement that schools will remain closed and not reopen before May 15, 2020, immediate planning and discussion began surrounding the eventual reopening of schools. Throughout the initial weeks of the COVID-19 crisis, districts and schools across the state began operating with various remote learning models for their students, with significant variation from one district to the next.

Now is the time to plan for and address the eventual reopening of schools, with an understanding that the health, safety, and wellness of students, families, educators, and staff must be a priority. National research currently indicates that no state has developed an Education Recovery Plan. Many states have announced generalities in terms of what the 2020-2021 school year will look like in their states. As reported by Education Week, April 28, 2020, "43 states, 4 U.S. territories, and the District of Columbia have ordered or recommended school building closures for the rest of the academic year, affecting approximately 45.1 million public school students".

I believe that Maryland has the leadership capability and is uniquely positioned to lead that initiative. True leaders act during chaotic times. Therefore, we have developed guiding principles that can be used by educational leaders as they contemplate the reopening of schools that provide educational environments that are conducive to learning, while maintaining the safety and security for students, faculty, and staff. Maryland is well-equipped to lead the nation in this all important endeavor.

The Maryland Together: Recovery Plan for Education contains a wealth of information that can be used as a point of reference by school leaders, students, and school communities. Through the collective endeavors of educational leaders and stakeholders throughout the state, the future educational needs of students will be fully addressed. The most important step will be for leadership to base important decisions on data, the uniqueness of individual school systems, financial capabilities, technological capabilities, and student needs. Prior planning will set the stage for accomplishments that will be achieved throughout the school year.

Remote learning cannot replace students' experiences with their teachers, administrators, and support staff. All of the students and educators with whom I have spoken have greatly missed the daily interactions that can only be experienced in classrooms and schools. We must all unite in our efforts to maintain equitable learning opportunities and safely return students to their schools.

Please note that the guidance in the Recovery Plan does not constitute a requirement for any district or school. Instead, the information should be used as a useful tool and resource. I encourage districts and schools to review the Plan and use it as a baseline or starting point that can be modified in collaboration with all stakeholders to fit each system's unique student population and needs. We will continuously update the Recovery Plan and provide additional resources as they become available.

The Maryland State Department of Education will continue to issue guidance and support to districts and schools throughout planning and implementation of processes that will be needed once schools are reopened. I understand that superintendents, principals, educators, staff, and families are working hard to support students during these difficult times. As educational leaders we must remain steadfast in our determination to respond to evolving conditions with noteworthy empathy, flexibility, and creativity. **Thank you for your tireless work on behalf of our students.**



Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.".

Karen B. Salmon, Ph. D. | STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

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INTRODUCTION

Where We Are, Who We Are

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and state of emergency declared by Governor Larry Hogan, Maryland schools have been closed since March 16, 2020, and will be closed at least through May 15, 2020. There is an understanding that education as we know it today will be changed tremendously in numerous unprecedented ways. It is incumbent upon educational leaders to begin taking concrete steps to **restore, rebuild, and, re-create education** as we know it today. The COVID-19 pandemic has in many ways changed our educational, economic, societal, and everyday way of life. As a result, we are now faced with an extraordinary challenge that will require the deployment of our individual and collective expertise to **address the needs of students, families, staff, faculty, and school communities**. Now is the time for each and every one of us to show conviction and courage in the decisions that are made, based upon historic changes not only in the state of Maryland, but also worldwide.

Since the closure of schools, the State Superintendent of Schools has been meeting multiple times each week with local School Superintendents to address issues related to COVID-19. Issues range from identifying concerns, to sharing best practices, as well as making recommendations. Other groups have also been meeting regularly including Assistant Superintendents for Instruction, Directors of Special Education, Directors of Career and Technical Education, Directors of Student Services, Coordinators of School Counseling, Federal Program Liaisons, Chief Financial Officers, and many other groups. In addition, five committees with state-wide representation were established and met to address and make recommendations on seniors/high school requirements, attendance for students and teachers, grading and reporting, English Learners, and Continuity of Learning (Standards). The State Board has taken actions and approved waivers to support the graduation of seniors and other policies. Now is the time to move forward to plan for the opening of schools in an environment which is safe for students, educators, cafeteria workers, bus drivers, and all school personnel. The Maryland Together: Recovery Plan for Education will address processes as procedures that should be considered immediately but also be utilized as a road map for future instances of school closures. In addition to the materials contained in the body of the Recovery Plan, the appendices contain resources with links to valuable information on considerations for reopening schools.

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TIMELINE OF MAJOR COVID-19 RELATED EVENTS IN EDUCATION

Challenges, Opportunities, and Key Dates

Following the Governor's declaration of a state of emergency in Maryland on March 5, 2020, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) has taken significant actions to protect the health, safety, and wellbeing of school communities.

MARCH 12, 2020: Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D., State Superintendent of Schools announced the initial closure of schools from March 16-March 27, 2020, the cancellation of all travel for students and staff, and a deep cleaning process for all school buildings.

MARCH 16, 2020: The Office of School and Community Nutrition at MSDE, alongside food directors from local school systems, began serving meals to students at sites throughout the State as an expansion of the summer meal program.

MARCH 24, 2020: The Maryland State Board of Education voted to submit requests for waivers to the U.S. Department of Education (USDE), which were approved. These actions waived requirements to administer statewide assessments to all students, to make annual accountability determinations, to identify schools for support and improvement, and to provide data on Maryland's and local report cards for assessment and accountability information.

MARCH 26, 2020: Dr. Salmon announced the extension of school closures until April 24, and the indefinite closure of child care facilities not serving essential personnel.

MARCH 30, 2020: Registered child care providers and other partners began providing child care services only to the children of essential personnel in Maryland.

APRIL 14, 2020: The Maryland State Board of Education approved a number of waiver requests and additional flexibility on a number of issues. This included additional clinical internship options, authority to the State Superintendent to waive certain instructional days, and waivers for certain graduation, assessment, and service learning requirements.

APRIL 17, 2020: Dr. Salmon announced the extension of school closures until May 15, 2020.

APRIL 24, 2020: Dr. Salmon announced additional grant payments of \$2,000 to child care providers serving the children of essential personnel.

APRIL 25, 2020: More than six million meals had been served at more than 600 sites across the State to school-aged children through the expanded summer meals program.

APRIL 28, 2020: The Maryland Public Secondary School Athletic Association (MPSSAA) announced the cancellation of the remainder of the 2019-2020 sports season and subsequent championships.

APRIL 28, 2020: The Maryland State Board of Education approved additional waivers for instructional days for nonpublic schools, certain requirements for teacher evaluations, and timelines for grade changes. The Board also gave permission to publish emergency regulations to establish initial certification to educator candidates during the state of emergency.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Strategies for Moving Forward

This document presents a number of strategies and considerations for school systems as communities move forward together to embrace the new normal of conducting school operations during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Reopening of, and re-entry into school buildings is dependent on the trends and key data points referenced in the Governor's "Maryland Strong: Roadmap to Recovery."

Not all options for school recovery operations fall into one of the phases identified in the Roadmap to Recovery. These guidelines are not designed to be prescriptive and seek to provide local jurisdictions with different ideas and options as they map out their own recovery plans.

The goal with each of the topics addressed is to assist in the articulation of a vision that can be easily communicated to members of the school community. *We all want students and educators to feel comfortable and safe returning to school environments.*

The best way to do that is to identify solutions that make transitions to and from online learning and a return to some form of in-person instruction, as seamless as possible. We have provided a checklist of items and considerations for school systems as they develop the recovery plan that works for their unique local circumstances. Please refer to Appendix A.

With the understanding that different systems require different solutions, we have identified a number of scheduling models and calendar considerations that can be used to fit the needs of each community. Modifying school schedules and calendars to account for lost instructional time and to ensure ongoing health and safety efforts, such as social distancing is of paramount importance.

I. Research

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the landscape of education more dramatically than any other phenomenon in the history of our state school system. An event of this magnitude will definitely impact how we provide education to students. The new normal of school operations may be measured in terms of before and after the pandemic. Today, daily school operations will likely include increased health and hygiene measures such as wearing masks, temperature checks, hand-washing, frequent sanitation, and social distancing, especially for elementary students. In addition, elementary playground areas may be marked for social distancing along with areas within schools. Enhanced cleaning procedures and sanitation measures will likely be necessary on a more frequent basis.

Reduced class sizes may be expected to become the norm, consisting of students placed in the smallest classes possible with desks that are placed six feet apart. Additional considerations will be given to holding classes outdoors, in the gymnasium, and other spaces when possible. Large school assemblies may not be possible and school dances and school functions reduced. Special areas such as art, health, and physical education may be offered remotely via video chat along with parent/teacher conferences, discipline conferences, 504, and IEP meetings. Considerations and adjustments in parental involvement in school activities may occur. Along with a reduction or elimination in the liberty of parents entering schools.

The response to changing situations will also require creative planning supported by research. Research supports a variety of approaches to reopen schools. These methods allow students to receive instruction in a way that safely “picks back up” where students left off, while maintaining appropriate guidelines for the health of students and staff.

RESTRUCTURING SCHOOL TIME

There are two general ways to reconstruct school time: Take the same number of minutes and days and reallocate them and add minutes or days. Generally, reallocation of time has **no impact** on student learning, for better or for worse. However, restructuring school time supports creative scheduling that safely bring back students if they need to be physically spread out.

Unfortunately, research on **time reallocation** suggests that no reallocation solution will make up for the spring/summer 2020 learning slowdown. Reallocation should therefore, be considered a baseline strategy for maintaining student learning while safely returning them to school.

Schools systems might elect to bring back a fraction of the students and redistribute the 180 days of the 2020-2021 school year. School systems might also “double-up” on in-person time with “A/B” days, as high schools do with block scheduling. (Research on **year round schooling** and **block scheduling**, which are approximations for these approaches, finds no impact for the average student in most subjects. For example, normally students might receive 60 minutes of both math and English Language Arts (ELA) in person, each day. Under a partial reopen, if students learned math in person every other day for 120 minutes, and ELA at home on the opposite days for 120 minutes, there would be no “slide” anticipated in math because students were only getting in-person instruction every other day.)

Only the **addition** of time (and/or instructional interventions, discussed below) might be expected to have a limited positive **impact**. International **research** has found that the positive effect of additional time on math and science achievement were largely due to longer school days, not longer school years, which may guide school system decision-making; if only half of the students may be present at one time. It may be more academically effective to have students in school for longer days on an alternating schedule, rather than every day on a half-day schedule.

SUBJECTS OF INSTRUCTION

Research on summer slide shows that a break or slowdown in instruction has a greater negative **impact** on **math** as compared to English Language Arts. This suggests that, if school systems cannot teach all subjects in person, it may be beneficial to prioritize the

teaching of math in person (or at least synchronously via distance learning). For example, an [NWEA simulation](#) shows less expected learning loss during a shutdown or slowdown in reading compared to math, which may be due to the fact that students can, and are more likely, to read independently at home than do math. Additionally, students are more likely to receive help at home in reading than in math.

MODES OF INSTRUCTION

[Research](#) has [consistently](#) found fully online virtual schools to produce less effective outcomes than those for students who are in brick and mortar school settings.

According to limited research on synchronous distance learning (mostly conducted on college students), if instruction must be online students prefer synchronous learning both for greater [understanding](#), comprehension, and for [social](#) and [collaborative](#) reasons (both between student and teacher and among students). Systems may therefore, consider avoiding fully online education and integrating synchronous learning and communication where possible when online learning occurs.

INSTRUCTIONAL INTERVENTIONS

The way instruction is delivered can have a larger effect than any particular curriculum or textbook. Specifically, on average, one-on-one tutoring and/or small group direct instruction [can be more effective](#) in raising student achievement than a specific curriculum, intervention, and/or set of instructional materials. Time when students are not in school may therefore, be better utilized in one-on-one or small-group synchronous sessions, rather than whole-class synchronous work and/or asynchronous learning. Further research suggests that paraprofessionals and instructional aides can deliver one-on-one and small group instruction as effectively as teachers, which may assist school systems in determining staffing decisions if resources and/or personnel are limited.

An additional strategy for the 2020-2021 school year might be looping (keeping students with the same teacher). [Looping](#) has small academic benefits for students at the end of the second year, with greater benefits for students of color. Since looping takes advantage of teachers' familiarity with students, it may be even more beneficial in the current situation because no state, and likely no local assessment data will be available to teachers. Looping can also have a positive impact on teacher effectiveness as familiarity with students may help new or less effective teachers improve.

AGE, ABILITY, AND SERVICE GROUP CONSIDERATIONS

Research, including an [NWEA simulation](#), indicates that, at least in grades 3-8, students in earlier grades will experience more of a negative impact when learning stops or slows down than students in later grades, with the caveat that this fact is for the average student. Further [research](#) on distance learning suggests that younger students have more trouble processing content delivered via online learning, even if delivery is synchronous. Considering these two points together, school systems may want to consider ways to allocate more or most in-person time to younger students.

In general, [research](#) on extra time programs suggests that the lowest performing students should be provided with as much instruction as possible. Further, [research](#) on distance learning suggests that at-risk, low-performing students are the population most likely to be negatively impacted by online schooling, meaning these students should have in-person instruction prioritized for them.

MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

[Research](#) shows the importance of mental and emotional well-being for students and staff, which has both psychological and ultimately academic outcomes. Access to [school counselors](#) and [school-based health clinics](#) helps students. Counselors and school based health centers will play an extremely important role in the adjustment period when buildings reopen.

II. Instructional Programs

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS AND ADJUSTED RETURN: SCHOOL OPTIONS

The Maryland College and Career Ready Standards (MCCRS) are essential in ensuring that students have a strong command of the skills and understandings associated with the critical areas. These skills and understandings are critical to building the foundational knowledge needed for the success of students. While all the MCCRS are important to educating the whole student, the current health crisis and the manner in which instruction must continue, necessitates the need for local school systems (LSS) to examine which standards have been taught and where the learning gaps exist due to the extended school closures. Local school systems are encouraged to identify the remaining standards to be taught and plan instruction focusing on the remaining standards.

In order to deliver a quality educational experience during these challenging times, students' social/emotional needs, special accommodations, and individual needs must be considered. Before instituting a revised curriculum for students, collaborate with central office level ESOL, Special Education, and School Counseling offices. The general education standards identified for Continuity of Learning should be considered when amending, as appropriate, a student's IEP goal(s)/objective(s) outside of an IEP team meeting, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Any amendment(s) made to a student's IEP should be agreed upon by the student's parent(s), documented, and changes provided to the parent and other members of the amended IEP service delivery team.

As schools are reopened and consideration is made to meet the needs of social distancing, the following are some scheduling options that might be considered. These suggestions are not the only options that may be considered by each LSS.

One-Day Rotation

Students report to school one full day a week at all levels (e.g., Elementary, Middle and High) for four days. Students will be provided assignments to support their learning on the days in which they do not report to school that could include paper, pencil, distance learning, or a combination.

All English for Speakers of Other Languages, Special Education, and resource teachers will work with small groups of students to reduce the student teacher ratios to 10 or less in each learning environment. Fine Arts, Physical Education and Health teachers would be included in the rotations to reduce the student teacher ratios. **** One day is used for teacher planning and professional learning. Students will not report to school, distance learning will continue.***

Two-Day Rotation

All students report to school two full days a week (e.g., Tuesday/Thursday or Wednesday/ Friday). Students would be provided assignments to support their learning on the days in which they do not report to school that could include paper, pencil, eLearning or a combination.

All English for Speakers of Other Languages, Special Education, and resource teachers will work with small groups of students to reduce the student teacher ratios to 10 or less in each learning environment. Fine Arts teachers, Physical Education and Health will be included in the rotations to reduce the student teacher ratios. **** One day is used for teacher planning and professional learning. Students will not report to school, distance learning will continue.***

A/B Week

Half of the student population will report to school for four full days each week, while the remaining second half of the school population participates in distance learning at home. The student population will alternate between each week. All grade bands will be included. Students will be provided assignments to support their learning on the days in which they do not report to school that could include paper, pencil, eLearning or a combination.

All English for Speakers of Other Languages, Special Education, and resource teachers will work with small groups of students to reduce the student teacher ratios to 10 or less in each learning environment. Fine Arts teachers, Physical Education and Health

will be included in the rotations to reduce the student teacher ratios. ** One day is used for teacher planning and professional learning. Students will not report to school, distance learning will continue.*

Elementary Face-to-Face and Secondary Distance Learning

Elementary students will start school first and attend four full days a week, spread out across two buildings (e.g., Elementary and Middle) to reduce the student teacher ratio to support social distancing. Secondary students would complete distance learning. **This would continue until it is deemed appropriate by the public health officials that it is safe to relax the social distancing. Once it is deemed safe, elementary students would transition back to their home school and secondary students would start.**

All elementary English for Speakers of Other Languages, Special Education, and resource teachers will work with small groups of students to reduce the student teacher ratios to 10 or less in each learning environment. Fine Arts teachers, Physical Education and Health will be included in the rotations to reduce the student teacher ratios. ** One day is used for teacher planning and professional learning. Students will not report to school, distance learning would continue.*

Grade Band Phase-In

The grade band phase-in approach would begin when the public health officials deem it is safe to relax the social distancing. Elementary students will return to school first, for a week. Middle school students would report the second and high school would report the third week. Middle and high school students will continue distance learning while waiting to phase back into school.

ASSESSMENTS

Fall Diagnostic Assessments

Diagnostic assessments for grades 3-8 and high school in mathematics and ELA will be administered at the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year. These assessments will be administered in early fall, however, should schools or systems need an extended assessment window due to a delayed entry of students into the schools, this can be accommodated. Results from these assessments will be electronically available to educators within 24-48 hours of administration and they will also serve as an opportunity to field test the new assessment items for the Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program (MCAP). The field testing of these items will allow for earlier scoring and reporting for our Fall Block 2020-2021 and spring 2021 for Mathematics and ELA.

Required Graduation Assessments

Additional assessment opportunities will be provided for the High School Maryland Integrated Science Assessment (MISA), High School Government, English Language Arts 10, and Algebra 1 during the fall semester. If school is in session in the summer, the High School Government assessment is scheduled to be administered.

Other Assessments

The Social Studies 8 assessment scheduled for field testing in spring 2020 will be administered in spring 2021. The MISA 5 and 8 assessments will be administered during the regular assessment window in spring 2021. Alternative assessments will be available through Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) and are student-customized assessments that are integrated into classroom instruction.

- Reports from these assessments will be available immediately following completion of the assessment to assist teachers in planning student learning.

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE)

Approximately 115,000 high school students are enrolled in CTE programs of study across 24 school systems. There are 55 state-approved programs of study. Each program of study provides the opportunity for students to earn postsecondary and/or industry credentials and participate in work-based learning experiences. COVID-19 school closures during the 2019-2020 school year impacted the ability of CTE students to complete work-based learning and core content hours needed to earn required credentials in career fields. Each school system developed a Continuity of Learning plan that addressed how students would continue learning while school buildings were closed. CTE students engaged in online experiences that reinforced core content. In some cases, students completed online modules that could be applied toward credential hour requirements. As schools reopen, there are several CTE-specific factors that must be considered.

Assess status of CTE inventory

CTE supplies may have been impacted due to COVID-19 school closure. For example, several schools donated CTE equipment or used CTE supplies to support COVID-19 recovery efforts. Plants required for agricultural and environmental science programs may not have been cared for consistently and food required for culinary programs may have spoiled while schools were closed. As a result, CTE programs may need supplies replenished prior to reopening schools. CTE Directors can contact MSDE Regional CTE Grant Specialists for information on how Perkins or CARES funds can be used to replenish CTE supplies.

Disinfect CTE equipment and workspaces

A process and schedule must be implemented to disinfect CTE equipment. It may be impractical to individually disinfect all CTE items such as nails, wires, clay, etc. As a result, it is recommended that CTE students wear disposable gloves, face masks, and aprons at all times when working with CTE equipment. A process must be established to recover and disinfect loaned equipment from health care facilities. CTE Directors can contact MSDE Regional CTE Grant Specialists for information on how Perkins or Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funds can be used to purchase new equipment in the event that loaned equipment cannot be recovered or appropriately disinfected for reuse.

Accelerate completion of credential requirements

Schools systems must consider implementing a compressed curriculum for CTE courses that focus on essential content. Options must be made available to engage students in learning experiences prior to the school year or before or after school. Diagnostic tests, formative assessments, or other assessment options in CTE can be implemented at the beginning of the school year to ascertain learning loss and progress. Information gathered can be used to inform curricular compression and instructional interventions. Career plans, secondary transition plans, and IEP requirements for CTE students must also be reviewed and addressed.

Modify work-based learning experiences

CTE Directors can contact employer partners to identify opportunities for students to complete work-based learning hours or industry-mentored projects virtually. When virtual experiences are not practical, social distancing guidelines must be followed. These guidelines must also be followed when clients come to school buildings to receive services (e.g.: Automotive Technician, Cosmetology, Childcare). Consider having clearly defined pathways for clients to travel when in the school building, implementing contactless payment systems, and establishing a process to disinfect work areas before and after services are administered. These guidelines would also apply to student enterprises such as the sale of coffee by students.

Transport students to career centers, worksites, and community colleges

Several CTE students take courses at both a comprehensive high school and career center or community college. When implementing modified schedules, consideration must be given to how social distancing guidelines will be applied when transporting CTE students. School systems may consider increasing course offerings in math, science, ELA, and other content areas at career centers to limit student travel. School systems may also consider allowing CTE students to take additional courses (e.g.: math, science, ELA) at a community college for high school credit to limit student travel. Several school systems provide

transportation for students to and from worksites. School systems must adhere to social distancing guidelines when transporting students and ensure that the worksites adhere to social distancing guidelines.

The Division of Career and College Readiness will provide additional guidance and support to CTE Directors as school buildings reopen.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

While the extended school closures have a significant impact on the education of Maryland students statewide, it is recognized that students with disabilities may experience increased distress and negative educational consequences due to the changes in instructional method and environment. There is a continuum of teaching and learning connected by the individualized continuity of learning plans (IEP as written, amended IEP, or revised IEP) for students with disabilities as we prepare for, and implement, recovery efforts.

The provision of special education and related services operates within the broader context of the general education curriculum and instruction, which continues to be a driver. Though this situation has impacted the ability of local public agencies to fully implement some students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), it is important to remember that a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) continues to be the touchstone for the IEP process, including special education eligibility and services during the extended school closures through the return to school and recovery programming. Now and during recovery, it is essential to provide FAPE and the provision of early intervention and special education services (IDEA) to the greatest extent possible.

The [Continuity of Learning Provisions for Students with Disabilities during the Extended School Closure due to the COVID-19 Pandemic flowchart](#) provides a visual framework for providing students with FAPE, while complying with procedural requirements under federal and State law. As this framework highlights, each public agency is required to consider the unique needs of the student, their IEP, and the local school system's Continuity of Learning plan to develop and implement, as appropriate, changes to the student's special education program within the context of distance learning. Local school systems and public agencies have been called upon to be creative and innovative in considering alternative service delivery methods.

The [Continuity of Learning Provisions for Students with Disabilities after the Extended School Closure due to the COVID-19 Pandemic flowchart](#) provides a visual framework for the transition back to school and recovery programming. As local public agencies begin taking steps to re-open school buildings under the leadership of the State Superintendent, they must keep the FAPE obligation at the forefront of their decision-making. This transition period takes into account the needs of the individualized student and provides flexibility for response, as appropriate. Any protocols that local public agencies develop to return students:

1. Addresses student-specific needs arising from the transition back into school buildings;
2. Considers whether or not a student has experienced a regression of skills and/or lack of progress; and
3. If regression and/or a lack of progress is present, identifies opportunities for recovery, including additional, new, or different services and accommodations.

Local public agencies and school communities are encouraged to continue to refer to the DEI/SES Technical Assistance Bulletin webpage of the MSDE website for more in-depth topical guidance addressing special education and related services during the extended school closures. Specific information has been added to provide specific recovery planning considerations (see Appendix A in each document).

General Considerations for Recovery Efforts for Students with Disabilities

- **Role of the family in the teaching/learning process.** Parents of students with disabilities have always had a decision-making voice and required participation at the IEP Team. Remote learning has increased parent capacity (with ongoing coaching and support by educators) to provide supplemental instruction and progress monitoring. In recovery efforts, leveraging this skill and elevating the supportive role of the family to accelerate student progress is essential.

- **Integration of technology.** During this period of continuity of learning technology has presented new uncharted opportunities for educators, school administrators, and families to leverage the benefits of technology to support learning and meaningful parent participation for students with disabilities.
- **Maintain a focus on Social/Emotional Wellbeing.** In recovery efforts, now more than ever, it is evident that schools play a critical role in the overall whole-child development process and quality of life for families. Research makes it clear that, compared to adults, children are more vulnerable to the emotional impact of traumatic events that disrupt their daily lives. Considerations for students with special needs, those who have a history of trauma, are broad and overarching.
- **School Operations**
Consider the following key areas:
 - Maryland Infants and Toddlers Program
 - Related Services (e.g., speech language, OT, PT)
 - Transportation (see [Considerations for Transportation Needs for Students with Disabilities during School Recovery Planning](#))
 - Non-public Special Education Schools
 - Consider students currently served through nonpublic special education schools remaining until schools resume normal operations in their totality.
 - Consider LSS collaboration to promote unity in support of nonpublic school plans for returning to the school house.
 - School Aged Special Education Services
 - Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Blind, Low-vision, and Deafblind Students)
 - Students with disabilities that require extensive intensive, individualized instruction, and supports)
 - Secondary Transition

Hire the required/additional number of teachers/staff to support the delivery of FAPE and IDEA.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR REMOTE LEARNING

A survey conducted with LSS Chief Information Officers reflect that additional equitable access to devices and Internet access for some of Maryland's students is a necessity. To provide equitable delivery of teaching and learning consider the following areas:

- **Instruction:** Leverage existing low-cost methods of remote learning that can be accessed via the widest possible variety of technology platforms.
- **Devices:** A global device shortage and interruptions to the supply chain has resulted in new device acquisition delays. Public schools may consider leveraging existing devices bought by families so that students who have access to Bring Your Own Devices (BYOD) now can experience a continuity of learning immediately. This may include Smartphones. Local school systems could leverage online learning tools and curricula that work well on phones. Students will need access to devices with a traditional keyboard. Regardless of devices used by students, student privacy and security must be maintained for safety. Taking into account the age and functionality of devices, when budgets are developed, ongoing maintenance and refresh of devices will need to be considered.
- **Staffing:** The IT staffing resources needed to integrate and support the increase in devices and technology applications may require additional IT staff. The investment in technology must be supported and sustained. Maintaining IT staffing is crucial to

ensure sufficient ratio of technical staff to system users. Existing ratios are not equitable among school systems.

- **Internet access:** Approximately 30 percent of the state's families do not have a reliable internet connection for learning. Collaboration with the state and local government to explore the option of delivering Wi-Fi to homes is critical. LSSs can take steps to extend the coverage and density throughout their system. This will include advocacy with local broadband providers. Any LSS provided with internet service must provide Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA)-compliant filtering. While this can be achieved through an Access Point Name carrier, it requires planning and configuration and comes at an additional cost.
- **Accessibility:** Leveraging the built-in accessibility features on native devices, for example on an iOS or Android smartphone. This is another reason why students in certain grades should have curricula delivered to them on their smartphones. Some students with disabilities might need special assistance with specific software to support their work. Consideration must be given to existing Federal and State accessibility related legislation and regulations (COMAR §7-910(d)(1); COMAR 13A.04.15.07 *Digital Learning*; COMAR 13A.05.02.13H *Purchase and Use of Accessible Teaching and Learning* materials: Revised Section 508 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act.)
- **Security:** IT departments need significant support in information, cyber, and privacy security. As remote learning continues, accountability into ensuring sound security practices must be implemented and enforced to counter a possible breach in confidentiality, integrity, and availability.
- **Device Transportation:** Devices are purchased with cases that protect them. However, school systems must consider policies and procedures for transporting devices to avoid accidental damage.

III. Support Programs

PROGRAMS TO REINFORCE LEARNING:

Summer Program

Summer programs provide educational opportunities to students during the summer months when schools traditionally observe summer break or summer vacation. These may also be called extended-year programs. The programs may be utilized for reteaching and reinforcement of learning gaps.

- **Original Credit Classes** – Original credit classes are required classes that are used to determine and document that students have met academic requirements. Academic credits are awarded upon completing and passing required coursework in a specific academic area.
- **Credit Recovery** – Credit recovery gives at-risk students who have failed a class, the opportunity to complete missing coursework, revise coursework, or retake a course in order to earn academic credit. Credit-recovery courses may be scheduled during normal school hours, after school, on vacation breaks, on-line, over the summer, or in alternate settings in order to meet the students' needs.

Enrichment Classes for Middle and High School

Enrichment classes are educational opportunities that go beyond what is taught in a traditional classroom and challenge students who have already mastered the traditional curriculum. They can occur before or after school or during the summer.

Middle School Assistance for Special Needs and At-Risk Students

Educational programs that provide services, resources, training, advocacy, and support to students and families of students who have special needs or at-risk for failure.

Saturday School

A type of program where the student attends school on Saturdays to reinforce instructional skills or to encourage positive behavior.

Increase Dual Enrollment

A program which will increase the number of students participating in dual enrollment programs at a high school and a local college. This allows the student to earn credits that apply to both high school diploma requirements and college graduation requisites.

Modified Calendars

A modified calendar that restructures the traditional school calendar to provide more continuous learning throughout the school year. It may include Saturday school, extended school days, or reduced summer time off for students. Types of modified calendars include:

- **Start School Early: Reduce Summer Time off for Students** – students would begin school earlier in the summer than a traditional school calendar.
- **Extended School Days in the Afternoon** – student school day is extended beyond the normal school dismissal schedule.
- **Open Schools Earlier in the Mornings** – student school day is extended by including an earlier start time.
- **Night Classes for Students** – student attends school in the evening.
- **Extend 2020-2021 School Year** – restructures the traditional school calendar to provide more continuous learning

throughout the school year and reduces summer time off for students.

- **Incremental Student Return Based on Grade** – returning students to school by grade to allow for social distancing.
- **Select Day Rotation with One Day for Remediation** – alternative schedule to provide for support to students with increased instructional needs.
- **Scheduling Based on Facility Usage** – utilization of multiple buildings for a single school to allow for social distancing.

Maryland Out of School Time (OST)

Programs will continue to provide opportunities for academic enrichment which includes providing instructional services to help students, particularly students who attend low-performing schools, to meet State and local student academic achievement standards in core academic subjects including language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. In addition, Maryland OST programs will offer students a broad array of additional services, programs, and activities such as: substance abuse and alcohol prevention, violence prevention, counseling, art, music, and technology education. Lastly, Maryland OST programs will continue to offer families of students served by community learning centers opportunities for literacy instruction and related educational development. State and federal funded Maryland OST programs continue implementation through the utilization of the following recommendations:

- Alternating/staggered days of instruction for students;
- Reducing class sizes to allow for fewer students;
- Placing student desks 6 feet from each other as possible in classrooms;
- Requiring students and staff to wear face coverings;
- Restricting students from changing classrooms; but rather have teachers change classrooms to avoid hallway traffic;
- Eliminating assemblies, field trips/recreation activities;
- Utilizing online/virtual parent trainings and meetings;
- Increasing health and hygiene measures; and
- Staggering school bus schedules to allow fewer students on a bus at a time.

CHILD CARE

Many elementary schools have child care programs that are co-located on the school site or operate as before or after school programs. Some are also located on high school campuses. These are licensed child care programs overseen by the Office of Child Care in the Division of Early Childhood at MSDE. As local school systems make decisions on opening, it is critical that this be coordinated with the Office of Child Care because regulations and temporary operating procedures have been put in place to ensure the health and safety of staff and children.

During the state of emergency, MSDE established two programs to serve essential persons needing child care: Essential Personnel Child Care (EPCC) and Essential Personnel School Age (EPSA). These operate under specific guidance developed by MSDE in coordination with the Maryland Department of Health. Guidance and FAQs regarding class/group size, temperature checks, cloth coverings, closures and other important considerations during the recovery period may be useful. The resources, including recommendations for the Center for Disease Control (CDC) can be found here: <https://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/covid-faqs>

Local school systems will want to consider opening child care programs prior to opening schools to ensure school staff have adequate care for their children while they are at work. Child care programs will need to be well-resourced with cleaning and medical supplies and the ability to purchase food and paper goods in bulk. Resources to support their success can be found here: <https://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/child-care-providers-serving-essential-personnel>

The Division of Early Childhood will be working with child care providers and stakeholders to develop a Child Care Recovery Plan.

IV. Professional Learning

Remote learning is new and all staff involved will need to be trained on how to deliver instruction via the web. Through additional professional learning opportunities including online pedagogy, educators will be able to transfer their high-quality teaching practices to the virtual environment. Professional learning should be provided to teachers on designing equitable instruction regardless of whether it is delivered in a virtual or a pen and pencil environment.

Mentors and coaches will need professional learning on mentoring/coaching in a virtual environment. Administrators will need professional learning on assisting, observing, and providing feedback to teachers in an online environment. Induction programs must consider how school closures impact professional learning, mentoring, and coaching for non-tenured teachers. Professional learning for first year teachers in 2020-2021 school year may need to address shortened student teacher experiences.

Consider partnering with institutions of higher education to offer courses related to teaching and learning through various delivery models, including teaching in a virtual environment.

Consider providing training for parents to support their children who are learning in a remote or virtual environment.

It is important to regularly assess the professional needs of educators to provide high quality, evidence-based professional learning practices. In light of the COVID -19 pandemic, a recent comprehensive assessment was conducted collaboratively by MSDE's Office of Information Technology, the Office of Accountability, and the Office of Instructional Technology to assess existing technology and teaching and learning needs in each school system. The survey revealed that additional professional learning was needed for all stakeholders involved in educating our students. In addition, the survey revealed that strong consideration must be given to providing additional funding and staffing to support professional learning.

Consider some of the following professional learning opportunities that are available through the Division of Curriculum, Instructional Improvement, and Professional Learning:

- Use the Active Online Teaching in Maryland course (3 credits) and Shadow Experience (1 credit)
 - Offered by MSDE or through the LSS that wishes to use a section for its LSS educators and have it supported by a qualified facilitator
 - Title II A and other funding sources will support these efforts
 - Graduates from this course and the shadow experience will be able to facilitate other MSDE student and professional learning online courses and any courses leased or purchased from vendors
- Develop an "Online Teaching in Maryland Light" course
 - Work with LSS approved and experienced facilitators to develop this course - Title II A funding
 - Course could be self-paced resulting in a badge or certificate, or we decide to submit it for 1 or 2 CPD credits - if it is self-paced without facilitator input and is only badged, it could be free
 - Involve some LSS educators who have struggled and those who have figured it out to help determine the strategies and pedagogy to be addressed (ID gaps) - Title IIA funding
- Educators are encouraged to provide online instruction on a monthly or weekly basis utilizing the LSS's instructional online platform. This will help make both educators and students more comfortable with the virtual environment - work involved, online strategies, and time management. This could be delivered during the regular school day to ensure equity.

V. Information Regarding Educators

EDUCATOR CERTIFICATION

The ongoing COVID-19 health crisis has not disrupted the ability of the MSDE to receive and process applications for certification. While the majority of our staff are teleworking, the Office of Certification is currently processing applications within the standard eight-week timeline. Office staff are available to assist applicants, existing educators, and LSS with their certification-related inquiries and needs by telephone and by email. As the Certification Assistance Line is closed, the Office of Certification is responding to questions from the public via the certinfo.msde@maryland.gov inbox. Those educators who are under contract with a LSS should continue to discuss their certification needs directly with their employer.

Assignment

- Code of Maryland Regulations state that each teacher employed in the public school systems of Maryland shall hold a professional certificate in the teacher's area of major assignment.
- Those same regulations allow for a teacher to be assigned outside of their area of certification.
- A teacher should not be assigned to more than two classes outside of their area of certification. If a LSS must assign a teacher to more than two classes outside of their area of certification, the teacher must work toward obtaining the certificate. For each consecutive year after the first year that a teacher is assigned to teach more than two classes outside the teacher's area of certification, the teacher shall earn at least six semester hours per year toward certification in the out-of-area assignment before continuing the assignment.
- A list of teaching areas may be found on our website at www.mdcert.org.

Emergency Certificate

On April 28, 2020, the State Board of Education approved an emergency amendment to COMAR 13A.12.01.14, Waivers and Special Certification Provisions. The amendment outlines the conditions of an emergency certificate, the purpose of which is to allow those educator candidates who have completed all of the requirements for certification with the exception of assessments and/or clinical experiences, the ability to act as a teacher of record with a Maryland LSS, state institution, or nonpublic school approved under COMAR 13A.09.10, as they complete the remainder of the professional certification requirements.

IMPORTANT NOTE: While the State Board of Education has voted to approve the emergency regulation, it must still go through the emergency regulatory process prior to taking effect. If approved by the Administrative, Executive, and Legislative Review Committee, MSDE will notify the LSS, state operated institutions, and nonpublic schools approved under COMAR 13A.09.10.

Renewals of Existing Certificates

- Per the Governor's Executive order, all educator certificates that expire during the state of emergency will be extended for 30 days from the date that the state of emergency is declared over.
- The MSDE has approved a new Continuing Professional Development (CPD) experience to award educators up to six CPD credits for having implemented their LSS Continuity of Learning Plan. This experience is available only to the specific individuals required to hold a certificate via Code of Maryland Regulation (COMAR) 13A.12.01.03B for renewal of a professional certificate.

In response to school closures and public health concerns, CPD course providers may choose to modify face-to-face instruction to hybrid/blended or online instruction. The MSDE is establishing clear parameters for LSS that have approved CPD courses occurring in spring or summer 2020, and want to modify the instructional mode of delivery.

Praxis Assessments

ETS, the MSDE's Praxis testing vendor, is working to develop an at-home testing option for certain Praxis tests and will waive fees for test rescheduling, if necessary. Additional information and updates are available on the [ETS Praxis testing website](#).

RECOVERY PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS: NON-PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The Nonpublic School Approval Branch of the MSDE is responsible for the regulatory oversight of nonpublic schools located throughout Maryland. These schools fall into three distinct categories; nonpublic schools approved under Code of Maryland Regulation (COMAR) 13A.09.09 (private pay), nonpublic schools approved under COMAR 13A.09.10 (publicly funded), and registered church-exempt schools. The first two types of schools are considered “approved” because they hold a Certificate of Approval issued by the Maryland State Board of Education. Registered church-exempt schools are exempt from the education regulations set forth by the Maryland State Board of Education because they are governed and operated by a bona fide church organization (Education Article §2-206). Each type of program is a legally sufficient way to operate in Maryland.

Maryland Law, Education Article, §2-206, Annotated Code of Maryland, exempts nonpublic schools that are governed and operated by a bona fide church organization from holding a Certificate of Approval from the State Board of Education. This means that a church-operated school is not required to meet the educational standards that have been established by the Maryland State Board of Education for

Nonpublic Schools under COMAR 13A.09.09 (private pay) and Registered Church Exempt Schools

Memos to nonpublic schools approved under COMAR 13A.09.09 and registered church-exempt schools, dated March 19, 2020, indicated the recommendation for these schools to close. The memos stated that these schools are “governed and operated by private organizations. The Legal Authority of each nonpublic school is responsible for making the determination regarding its school closure as a result of COVID-19.” During the recovery phase from this pandemic, decisions regarding the operating status of each nonpublic school (for both nonpublic schools approved under COMAR 13A.09.09 and registered church-exempt schools) will continue to be made by the school's Legal Authority.

Nonpublic Schools under COMAR 13A.09.10 (publicly funded)

A memo to nonpublic schools approved under COMAR 13A.09.10, dated March 17, 2020, stated that these schools “are required to be closed through April 15, 2020, and for any subsequent required extensions.” For schools providing special education services, the recovery phase from this pandemic involves planning with local school system partners (and IEP teams as applicable) to determine the most appropriate process for students placed in these schools to return to their educational settings. Planning should consider provision of transportation, special education instruction, and related services, as applicable.

A local school system may elect to open schools in a gradual fashion, (e.g. opening schools to specific grades only). If this decision is made, the Legal Authority of each nonpublic school approved under COMAR 13A.09.10 may choose to either gradually open in accordance with a local school system or open to all students, as each school deems appropriate.

VI. Preparation and Services

SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY NUTRITION PROGRAMS

Engaging stakeholders at the local school system level will be critical in the process of ensuring continuity of equity and access for student nutrition, and for successful transition of school nutrition program operations from current pandemic emergency feeding models to a model for reopening schools. Refer to Appendix B for School and Nutrition Services for Roles, Services, and Strategies.

Key Operational Considerations for developing and implementing a plan to reopen School Nutrition Programs as a component of the “Roadmap to Recovery: A Public Health Guide for Governors,” including work to Create a Framework for Reopening (Step 7, pp 21-23) is described below.

Who should be included in efforts to develop and implement the framework for reopening Nutrition Programs in Schools?

- Maryland State Department of Education, Office of School and Community Nutrition Programs (MSDE OSCNP) for communication and administration of Child Nutrition Program (CNP) requirements and compliance for school meals, federal CNP policy, waivers, USDA Foods programs, the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), and coordinated technical assistance for School Food and Nutrition Programs in Maryland.
- Maryland State Department of Education for coordinated leadership to include a plan for continuity of student meals programs in the overall requirements for reopening of schools at the local level.
- Maryland State Department of Health (MDH) for information and coordination about health and safety plans and implementation, reporting and trace back of virus outbreak in schools; Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) and protective measures for students and CNP staff; guidance for implementation of social distancing, sanitation, handwashing and other measures to reduce risk of viral spread during student consumption of meals in the school building; guidance for mask hygiene (e.g., washing, storing, distributing, and using reusable masks); guidance on use of masks by children and youth; guidance on social distancing protocols for congregate meal settings.
- Local Health Departments by jurisdiction for amendments to school Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) plans to accommodate COVID-19 hygiene measures; recommendations for Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for sanitation of school kitchens, cafeterias, food warehouses, central production kitchens/facilities; and for social distancing in food transportation, distribution, and consumption, and local compliance requirements.
- Local School Superintendent and/or Board of Education for coordination of staff and facilities to accommodate students eating meals on campus during the school day and ensuring continuity of school nutrition for students.
- Local School Food and Nutrition Service Director for logistics related to school food service operations, including: planning and implementation of production and distribution models for required student food programs; food supply chain and availability in their area; staffing plan for reopening schools with consideration for additional staff needed to complete enhanced cleaning and sanitation requirements; requirements for PPE and other measures to ensure safety of essential school food program employees.
- Local School Nursing representatives for measures to include daily screening of school nutrition staff prior to entering buildings/beginning work; protocols for immediate containment of students and staff who present symptoms and other measures to mitigate the spread of viral outbreak.
- Other stakeholders as determined at the LSS level.

2020 COVID-19 Pandemic Reopening Guidelines and Issues for Consideration

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented unique challenges to LSSs across the State of Maryland. While emergency planning and recovery plans are part of any Emergency Operations Plan of a school facility, COVID-19 has posed additional concerns and requirements from a health perspective that will require non-traditional operations to facilitate a return to the learning environment.

The Maryland Center for School Safety has developed this document for LSSs to utilize when working towards reopening. While comprehensive, this document is not all encompassing and should not be used as a stand-alone resource. As always, work with your respective Health Department to ensure up to date protocols are in use towards recovery/reopening.

The first step will be to **appoint/assign a dedicated Recovery Leader or Incident Commander**. Assigning an Incident Commander will allow management and a designated team to prepare for reopening of school facilities. Designated team personnel should include representation from multiple divisions/resources within your LSS and community.

Key areas have been identified to assist with Re-entry into schools and are aligned with the U.S. Department of Education Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools Technical Assistance Centers Recovery Fact Sheet identified below (Note – additional information on areas identified below are further developed in other sections of the Recovery Plan):

Personnel:

Preparation for Opening

- Work with your local health department, determine when it is deemed safe to begin resumption of normal educational activities
- Determine how faculty and staff will receive timely, factual information regarding return to work
- Identify faculty/staff shortages due to:
 - loss of staff life, staff sickness
 - Staff caring for sick relative or loss of staff family member
 - resignations of faculty/staff
 - retirement of faculty/staff

Note: If loss of any kind is determined to have occurred, see Mental Health Section

- Determine if face coverings are to be utilized by faculty/staff/students
- Review procedures for sending ill persons home from the school facility
- Determine if pre-designated entry and exit paths will be utilized
- Determine pre-designated drop-off points for buses, parents
- Determine if class changes are static (students remain in room, teachers change classrooms) or Fluid (Students change classrooms)
- If fluid period/topic changes occur, determine:
 - Is locker use allowed, if not, secure from use
 - Determine distance and flow paths through facility, mark flooring, walls appropriately
 - Determine communication and outreach methods to students and parents for notification of above
 - Determine a "Use of restroom" policy that maintains distancing,

Post opening

- Communicate to Faculty/Staff/Students proper hygiene techniques
- Communicate the “Use of restroom” policy to students
- Post signage within restrooms on proper hygiene practices
- Provide communication to students, parents on new academic policies in place

Mental Health:

- Support services for loss of any staff, students, or family
- Mobilize crisis recovery team to provide emotional and psychological support
- If school community has experienced a loss of life, establish “safe rooms” as needed within each facility for counseling service provision
- Announce counseling support services available to faculty and staff via Employee Assistance Programs that are available
- Hold faculty and staff meetings to provide information on signs and symptoms to observe in students
- Identify and provide information on safe room function and location
- Communicate counseling support services available to students
- Have available for staff, parents, and families educational materials on loss and grief and ways to cope with stress
- Work with faculty and staff on identifying families in need of long term physical and mental health support and intervention and provide resources to families
- Work with LSSs on how to handle commemorations, memorial activities, and permanent marker establishment, if allowed
- Determine how memorial activities will strike a balance among honoring a loss, resuming school activities and class routines, return to schedules and maintaining hope for the future

Facilities:

- Determine if daily screening is required by Local Health Department, (See Resource Capabilities)
- Meet with local health department to determine social distancing requirements, if any, to determine allowable seating within each classroom
- Determine school-based procedures for staff, student, parent communications
- Review procedures for sending ill persons home from the school facility
- Has signage been increased in restrooms on proper hygiene techniques
- Determine if additional cleaning requirements are needed prior to reopening of school facilities and type(s) of cleaning allowed
- Determine if locker use will be allowed, if not where will materials/coats be stored
- Determine if “spacing and flow” through hallways, cafeterias and open seating area markings are required and if so, install
- Re-order/stocking of cleaning/disinfectant supplies for each facility
- Set classrooms up with allowed seating distances as determined by Health Department
- Re-sanitize facilities as directed, throughout the day, if required

This section utilizes information from resources such as: The U.S. Dept. of Education’s Readiness and Emergency Management

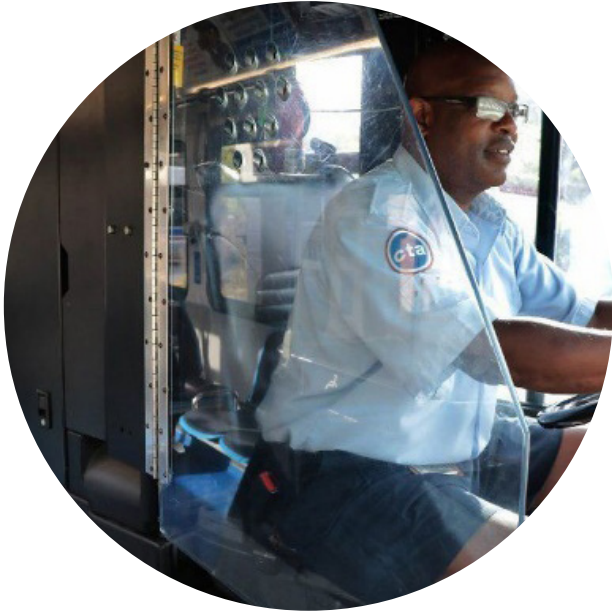
for Schools Center (REMS), The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), The King County Washington Schools, and conversation with our school safety partners in Virginia and Delaware.

TRANSPORTATION

Options regarding safety of transporting students:

- The State should provide notice to school systems (transportation departments) two weeks or more prior to having to transport any children.
- School buses that have not been inspected since fall should have a safety inspection prior to transporting any children (MVA).
- For school buses that have not been used for the past 30 days, there is no need to do any through cleaning because any virus will have been killed off.
- Any school bus used for food distribution should be cleaned prior to transporting.
- School bus drivers will need to attend in-services before transporting students to be informed about new policies and procedures, as well as understand how to effectively clean their bus.
- There is a high level of concern that these drivers/ attendants (many of which are in the high risk category for COVID-19) will be unwilling to put themselves at-risk unless there is widespread testing or vaccine for drivers and children.
- School systems should be prepared to provide all bus drivers PPE that would include Masks, Gloves, hand sanitizer, a forehead thermometer, and wipes.
- School systems will need to develop policies that may include taking a temperature check before allowing a child on the bus, all children must wear a mask while on the bus, seats being marked off with tape to avoid children sitting too close to each other, etc.
- Routers may need additional time to assign/reassign buses if social distancing require districts to use more buses due to transporting less student per bus.
- Having different grades attend different days may cause issues with overcrowding on some buses and a lack of students on others.
- Systems should be prepared for an increased number of parents transporting their own children to and from school due to health concerns and/or parents being out of work or unemployed.
- This additional influx of cars may cause long delays in student arrival and departure if school grounds are not designed to handle a large number of car riders.
- The Transportation of Special Needs students may be a concern because some students will have issues with spitting, screaming, biting or other behaviors that may spread COVID-19.
- Transporting of Special needs students will be important to ensure no Office of Civil Rights violations with IEDA (IEP and 504 students).
- Pre and post-trip inspections will now have to include the cleaning of high use areas of the bus, steering wheel, handles, seat backs, etc.
- School systems will have to be prepared to enact contact tracing if a child has been determined to have COVID-19 while riding to or from school on a school bus.
- Transportation issues will continually change based on the evolving nature of the pandemic.

- A protective plastic barrier can (may) be installed behind the driver and/or alongside (if allowed by the MVA) (See examples below).



As schools reopen Student Services provide support in meeting the social/emotional needs of students, enrolling and transferring students, addressing health needs, assisting parents, communicating with outside agencies, etc. The services and strategies needed are described in the tables below to assist central office and school based personnel.

Role	Services	Strategies
Pre-planning for phased re-entry	<p>Professional development</p> <p>Transitions – services that can be implemented spring and summer</p>	<p>Create professional development for staff regarding typical childhood reactions to stress and trauma which might have resulted from home confinement</p> <p>Help student service staff create professional development for teachers and adult staff (remember bus drivers, cafeteria, and janitorial staff)</p> <p>Co-facilitate staff training related to re-entry concerns, e.g. trauma, grief, etc.</p> <p>Assist in the development of a re-entry protocol with the school leadership team and communicating the plan to students and families.</p> <p>Secure posters of each high school senior near school or on student’s front yard</p> <p>Create virtual celebrations for seniors (Awards ceremonies, graduations, reflection of high school ceremonies produced by school staff for seniors, college and career days, school spirit days)</p> <p>Consider drive-by awarding of diplomas; Utilize social media to celebrate maintaining privacy of students</p> <p>Provide same ideas for middle school students transitioning to high school and consider some sort of ceremony for elementary school children transitioning to middle school.</p> <p>Hold virtual transition meetings between school counselors at sending and receiving schools. Work with special education to participate or to hold additional meetings.</p> <p>Share transitioning materials with elementary to middle school students and middle to high school students. Provide virtual school tours of receiving schools, if possible.</p> <p>Collaborate with receiving school counselors to have them present to transitioning school students. For example, have high school counselors and staff hold a virtual welcome to 9th grade.</p> <p>Create classroom guidance lessons on transitioning to a new level. In person, if possible, (e.g., students practice opening locks on lockers)</p> <p>Coordinate a parent night for parents of students who are transitioning to new school level (elementary to middle and middle to high). Include current parents of students who transitioned in the previous year.</p> <p>Prepare to offer real tours and meetings for transitioning students when it is safe to do so.</p>

Mental health support	Classroom guidance, individual counseling, group counseling, referrals, student support team referrals, community referrals	<p>Consult with classroom teachers about student needs and develop classroom guidance lessons as appropriate to the age and grade level</p> <p>Teach, or co-teach social emotional learning strategies to help students adjust to the changes in their environments</p> <p>Assist teachers with celebrating individual student resilience (What I did during the virus to be safe)</p> <p>Analyze student work to assess mental health needs (Journals, art work, etc.)</p> <p>Develop classroom guidance lessons on gratefulness: post student work in hallways thanking the cleaning staff, the nurses, doctors, grocery workers, etc.</p> <p>Assist teachers or create classroom guidance lessons on how to help others at a safe distance. Encourage virtual hellos and stories to seniors in nursing homes, etc.</p> <p>Provide individual counseling to students who express fears, loss, anxiety and/or signs of depression</p> <p>Refer students to outside counseling as needed</p> <p>Provide safe, social distancing for group counseling</p> <p>Co-teach lesson (health) on depression symptoms and warning signs and offer referral services to students and staff</p> <p>Observe and talk to students who may have signs of abuse or neglect. Use referral processes to secure help for the student and family</p> <p>Plan with administrators for sudden closing of schools due to resurgence of the virus.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to reach homeless students, student without internet services, etc. • How to stock up on needed supplies should the virus return • Communication strategies for parents, students, staff and teachers <p>Collaborate with student support staff and administrators for emergency planning should the virus return and schools need to close again.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuation of learning, disinfecting schools, mental health concerns of repeated stress of isolation, return, and re-isolation. <p>Check in with staff to determine their mental health needs and work with Employee Assistance as needed.</p> <p>Provide professional development for staff on issues related to the possible return of the virus and stress management.</p>
	Developmental classroom support	<p>Provide classroom lessons on school expectations and structure to help students re-adjust to a full school schedule</p> <p>Facilitate classroom guidance on social distance practices in school, community, home, etc.</p> <p>Assist teachers with behavioral concerns and counsel students to determine root causes.</p>

Academic and school success	Scheduling, grades, new entrants, and transfers	<p>Assist with the development and implementation of adjusted schedules.</p> <p>Adjust class sizes in the Student Information System (SIS) if necessary.</p> <p>Plan for the completion of course requests and scheduling for next school year (secondary school)</p> <p>Assist teachers with finalizing grades and providing updates to students and families</p> <p>Assist administrative assistants with transcript requests to help break backlog. Consult with PPWs about students who may have moved or who are not showing up.</p> <p>Assist registrar (high school) or secretaries (elementary) in the enrollment of students transferring from other schools or states. Prepare for an increased number of enrollments</p> <p>Provide updated college and career advisement in coordination with Institutes of Higher Education (IHEs), e.g., admissions, financial aid apprenticeships, and scholarships (secondary)</p>
Career and College		
Consultation/Coordination	Parent and community outreach	<p>Welcome and reassure parents when they drop students off in the morning. Have staff create posters thanking parents for filling in for teachers.</p> <p>Create materials for parents regarding their fears and how to deal with those fears. Share materials with parents on how to talk to their children about managing change and about managing feelings during times of stress.</p> <p>Coordinate services with other related service providers, in the school and community to identify and address other student and adult needs.</p> <p>Provide socially distant parental information evenings regarding what the school is doing to keep students safe. Include other student services staff as presenters.</p> <p>Work with administration to develop communication strategies for outreach to all parents and students. Invite parent to provide input and ideas.</p>

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

Role	Services	Strategies
Providing support to schools	Supporting school staff	Participate with student support and administrative staff in developing re-entry protocols and procedures for students.
Pre-entry		Consult with administration and student services teams to provide professional development on student and staff reactions to stress and imposed isolation/change.

	Mental Health	<p>Co-lead classroom lessons on social emotional learning strategies.</p> <p>Consult with teachers as students return to identify classroom interventions for individual students as appropriate.</p> <p>Provide information to teachers about signs of depression, lack of motivation, and disengagement, so they can identify students who need support.</p> <p>Consult with teachers and administration on school-wide behavioral needs of students and work with the student support team to provide supports.</p> <p>Collaborate with school counselors and school social workers to provide lessons for students regarding managing change and managing anxiety.</p> <p>Consult with student services staff on plans to address the possibility of another outbreak and how to emotionally prepare students and staff.</p> <p>Provide supportive counseling and consultation for teachers who are struggling with issues related to the virus and confinement. Refer staff to community and system agencies.</p> <p>Visit classrooms to observe adult behaviors looking for signs of stress and anxiety. Discuss concerns with administration and refer as needed.</p> <p>Assist as a member of traumatic loss team to identify students who have lost a close family member or relative to COVID-19 while they were not in school. Triage for supportive services as needed.</p> <p>Provide threat assessments as needed to students who present as a danger to self or others.</p> <p>Meet with parents to discuss student needs and provide information to parents on how to talk to their children about corona virus.</p>
Special education supports	Assessments	<p>Meet with students to complete assessments. Work with Central Office staff to accommodate the back-log of needed assessments (e.g., double up psychological service providers to schools with students who need assessments).</p> <p>Check in with emotionally vulnerable students as they return to school to assess their level of functioning.</p> <p>Meet with parents to discuss student needs and secure permission for assessments.</p> <p>Consult with IEP teams and 504 teams to adapt student plans to meet emerging student needs.</p>
Counseling/therapy	Individual supports	<p>Consult with teachers, school counselors, parents, and school social workers to deliver services to students who display outward signs of trauma.</p> <p>Refer students to outside agencies as needed.</p> <p>Provide age appropriate information and support to students related to student anxiety, fears, and loss.</p>

SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS

Role	Services	Strategies
School support re-entry	Consultation, collaboration	<p>Work with administration and student support staff to develop re-entry procedures for students.</p> <p>Collaborate to create professional development activities for faculty and student re-entry with a focus on mental health needs.</p> <p>Collaborate with school counselors on classroom guidance activities related to what students did during the confinement period. Assess student work for signs of abuse, neglect, or depression.</p>
Family support	Home visits, consultation, referral, and counseling	<p>Visit families who need information and support regarding health, food, shelter, Medicaid and other community services</p> <p>Prepare safety and other corona virus information for parents. Include what the school is doing to keep student safe.</p> <p>Refer families to community agencies for resources.</p> <p>Consult with school counselors and teachers regarding students who report a lack of food or shelter.</p> <p>Observe students in eating areas to see who has food and who does not.</p> <p>Consult with school nurse regarding students without medical coverage. and refer to Medicaid programs.</p> <p>Counsel families (observing social distancing to address family relationships that may have been strained by confinement).</p> <p>Provide therapeutic interventions for students who need service for depression, anxiety, fear, and loss.</p> <p>Provide services required on IEPs as student return to schools.</p> <p>Assess students for signs of abuse or neglect. Meet with students as needed around these issues.</p> <p>Check-in with students with known anxiety and fear concerns. Provide counseling as needed.</p> <p>Observe staff for signs of stress and anxiety. Refer as needed. Involve Employee Assistance.</p> <p>Provide information to parents on home visits (protective gear) regarding school attendance and child discipline techniques.</p>

School support	Classroom lessons/ before and after school duties.	<p>Work with student support staff to create an emergency plan related to the possible return of the virus and/or possible school re-closure. Focus on social emotional needs of faculty and staff as well as students.</p> <p>Co-lead with teaching staff on social emotional learning skills.</p> <p>Assist teachers with classroom lessons on scheduling and managing change.</p> <p>Consult with school counselors regarding character education and mindfulness strategies for the classroom.</p> <p>Observe students to help identify interventions that match student needs. Watch for signs of depression, lack of motivation, or disengagement.</p> <p>Assist at school drop offs and pick-ups to observe students as they return to their families.</p> <p>Consult with student service and IEP teams to identify students in need of supportive therapy/counseling and provide the service.</p>
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PUPIL PERSONNEL WORKERS, FOSTER CARE, AND HOMELESS LIAISONS

Role	Services	Strategies
Following up on no-shows when students return	Transportation to school	<p>Arrange transportation to and from school for student in need of transportation.</p> <p>Make home visits with protective gear to determine why the student is not coming to school.</p> <p>Address parent fears about letting their children go back to school. Create materials to share with parents. Share precautions taken in all schools.</p>
Providing support to schools	Supporting school staff	<p>Assist in schools when possible.</p> <p>Help in hallways reminding students to stay a safe distance apart.</p> <p>Meet families at the front door of schools to share resources and help observe student and family interactions.</p> <p>Provide follow up discussions with students who are known to have family issues.</p>
Providing community resources	Assisting students and families with mental health services	<p>Coordinate services with Child Welfare Agencies (CWA) as appropriate</p> <p>Meet with student individually to assess needs. Consult with student service team to address needs.</p>

	<p>Provide links to community services</p> <p>Presence in school to observe students as they participate in classroom activities and in the hallways and cafeteria.</p> <p>Communication with Child Welfare liaisons for children who are homeless/foster care.</p>	<p>Deliver resources (safety measures in place) such as food as needed to families who are homebound.</p> <p>Make calls/home visits to families in need of services due to virus.</p> <p>Assist school personnel in observing students who might be exhibiting possible signs of trauma.</p> <p>Contact community resources to request that they reach out to families.</p> <p>Identify students who are newly homeless and connect them to resources.</p> <p>Provide and facilitate fast registration in new schools.</p> <p>Provide fliers with information about community to home.</p>
Develop plan(s) providing assistance to schools with student enrollment.	Assist families with new guardianship orders due to virus	<p>Reentry of students who resettled with another relative/fictive kin due to virus. Fictive Kin is a non-relative with court appointment as guardian for the child. Md. Code, Family Law § 5-534</p> <p>Assist with enrollment and documentation of family member or court order for fictive kin.</p> <p>Assist military families with orders of transfer.</p>
Through phone calls and home visits assist families for entrance back to school.	<p>Outreach to families that have not responded to school outreach.</p> <p>Verifying residence(s)</p>	<p>Provide assistance for schools on enrollment for new/transferring students.</p> <p>Provide assistance for schools with pre-K and Kindergarten enrollment.</p>
<p>As a Foster Care/ Homeless Liaison, PPW will provide services needed for reentry. Will assist the school liaisons as warranted.</p> <p>Communication with CWAs and school system liaisons in addressing special needs might arise.</p>	Foster Care and homeless students services	<p>Assist homeless and foster care liaisons in the support of these students, who may have increased concern with school entrance.</p> <p>Assist CWAs address extra needs the students may have with peer and teacher separation.</p> <p>Child Welfare and Attendance (CWA).</p>
Resource and Consultation	All students and school staff	<p>Consult with student service teams regarding student needs.</p> <p>Consult with administrators and teachers to address needs of students and community.</p> <p>Connect community service providers and schools.</p>

Role	Services	Strategies
Provide leadership and guidance for local school health services programs during pandemic	Health Education: Students and Staff	<p>Provide basic information about COVID-19, include age appropriate information for students/staff.</p> <p>Delivery of good hygiene practices includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine how information will be delivered to students and school staff. • Provide general strategies via video format prior to school re-entry. • Continue health education on good hygiene once school is in session. <p>Topics for Good Hygiene Practices include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handwashing • Covering coughs and sneezes • Staying home when ill • Temperature monitoring, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking temperature at home; and fever (what number is considered as fever?) • The state health agency will provide guidance on the number considered as fever. <p>Educate school community about infection control strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wearing masks when in public • Social distancing • Recognizing signs and symptoms of COVID-19 illness or notifying school if family members are ill • Guidance on what to do if the family unit has been tested and diagnosed with COVID-19 <p>Additional staff education may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of school emergency response plans related to pandemic situations • Continuous awareness of signs and symptoms of COVID-19 • Use of PPE – gloves, masks, and face shields • Temperatures and definition of fever • Proper handwashing techniques • Environmental cleaning of school building – health suite, classrooms, etc. <p>Be aware of increased anxiety during this time of COVID-19 as the school staff, students, and parents/guardians.</p> <p>Promote continuous communication between the school, student, and</p>

	<p>Promote continuous communication between the school, student, and family as a sign of unity and togetherness.</p> <p>Encourage and challenge practice of good hygiene with school staff and students. Model good hygiene practices and use available resources from the state/local health agencies; federal health agencies (CDC) where possible.</p>
Health Office: Ventilation and Set-Up of Physical Space (includes areas for separating/isolating well and sick students)	<p>Proper ventilation is necessary in the school health suite/office. Adequate air flow is necessary to maintain a healthy environment within the school building and in the school health office:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check for windows opening and access to fresh air • Can health office be temporarily relocated for better ventilation/adequate air exchange? • Use of fans/circulating fans for adequate air exchange. • Is there an available isolation area within the current health suite? – If not, planning for this needs to be considered <p>Use a separate isolation area for effective infection control management and the reduction of widespread infections related to COVID-19.</p> <p>Separate students and staff exhibiting signs and symptoms of infection from healthy students and staff.</p>
Health Office: Management of ill students within the health office	<p>School nurse and other health services staff to wear PPE (mask/face shield) when working with students.</p> <p>Health office needs to allow for separate space to treatment and student care (isolation area needed for sick students with fever).</p> <p>Have adequate supplies available for school nurse and other school health services staff working with the nurse.</p> <p>Have a first aid and medication station outside the health office for students who are well and use the health room space for ill students. *Note: Health room space may present a challenge for older school buildings. Accommodations must be made to for infection control measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and other diseases.</p>
<p>Health Office: Medication Orders</p> <p>a) routine medication prescribed for students during the school day</p> <p>b) Standing orders for management of ill students in the school during the school day, and</p>	<p>Check on supply of daily medications and prescriptions for use and follow authorized prescriber orders.</p> <p>Establish a procedure for students who receive daily medications during the school day.</p> <p>Develop a flowchart regarding when to isolate and send home. This will assist other school health services staff (LPNs, CNAs, CMT) to help the flow of the health suite to be as effective and efficient as possible.</p> <p>Require students to present a doctor's note for return to school.</p> <p>Follow procedures for students/staff who may arrive to school with illness and send home as soon as possible to avoid spread of infection.</p>

	c) Standing orders for the management of students returning to school after illness	Follow existing procedures for students/staff returning after illness, must be fever free for the defined period of time within the current school health guidelines.
	Types of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	Health Suite supplies include: gloves, face Masks, face shields, and protective gowns, bonnets, and shoe protectors (booties). Materials should be inventoried and may need to be restocked in not on site. Determine how these materials can be accessed.
	Strategies to manage and reduce Mental Health/Anxiety	Work with school counselor and school psychologists on strategies to reduce mental health and anxiety related to COVID-19. Be sure to acknowledge the situation, acknowledge and validate the emotions, and provide a coping toolbox for calming strategies.
	Health Office: Disinfecting Strategies	Work with building maintenance and principal regarding the use of appropriate disinfectants. Thorough cleaning of all surfaces in the health room must be done daily by custodial staff. Continue to promote handwashing techniques. Clean surfaces regularly. Also continue to practice social distancing to the extent possible in the school setting.
	School Building: Monitoring Illness and Management Strategies	Practice social distancing. Monitor absenteeism. Consider re-entry in phases with continuation of distance learning. Stagger school start times if appropriate. If implemented, the school nurse should be aware if this may affect medication administration during the school day. Continue with regular disinfecting/cleaning of school areas.
	Monitoring and Triaging At-Risk and Vulnerable Student and Staff Population	Refer to medical provider to determine school entry for individuals with special health concerns, including individuals who are immunocompromised and have a weak immune system.

<p>Potential use of School Nurses in local counties</p> <p>Will receive training to assist with COVID-19 testing, contact tracing process, and assisting in local call centers at the local health departments and/or hospitals.</p> <p>Assist in clinical supervision of local call centers, including providing clinical guidance and appropriate health education</p>	<p>Health Services and School Nursing staff</p>	<p>Assist with COVID-19 testing and Contact Tracing education,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School nurses will receive training from local health department staff for performing COVID-19 testing and other techniques for effective infections control (e.g. teaching donning and doffing) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upon successful training for COVID-19 testing and test kits, school nurses will participate in local health department clinics to test individuals with signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and/or suspected exposure to COVID-19 • Collect specimens at drive up and walk up testing sites • Assist at local child sheltering centers • Assist with local acute communicable disease programs for testing • School nurses will receive training from local health department staff about contact tracing to prevent the spread of COVID-19 within the community • Assist with local acute communicable disease programs for contact tracing • Provide contract tracing that recognizes increased anxiety during COVID-19 related to testing of individuals with suspected infection and increased spread of infection due to possible exposure to individuals with suspected COVID-19 infection • Teach and promote self-quarantine and social isolation from others if suspected exposure to COVID-19 or receipt of positive testing results for COVID-19 • Encourage the continued practice of social distancing and proper hand hygiene, and other healthy hygiene practices if there is suspected exposure to COVID -19 to avoid the spread of infection. • Contact tracing training includes the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeking health education training of school nurses to provide support for individuals with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infection. • Reaching out to exposed individuals and individuals who have a confirmed positive test for COVID-19 • Providing information to contacts to understand the risks associated with COVID-19 infection • Stressing the importance of social distancing and self-quarantine/isolation from others to prevent spread of infection • Stressing that individuals must understand the signs and symptoms of COVID-19, especially coughing and shortness of breath, and continued monitoring for illness or change in one's health status. – Must seek prompt medical evaluation for infection and immediate medical care is symptoms • Teach individuals about the purpose of contact tracing and encourage to stay home, maintain social distancing
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SCHOOL BASED HEALTH CENTERS

Role	Services	Strategies
Provide leadership, guidance, and support for local school-based health center (SBHC) programs during and after the COVID-19 pandemic	Provision for available health care services to students, parents/guardians, and staff enrolled in the local SBHC Program	<p>Traditional SBHC programs may provide continuity of care to students and families during COVID-19, including ongoing health education and health care services during the re-entry to schools.</p> <p>Services provided by traditional SBHC programs may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Somatic health care, • Mental Health/Behavioral Health, • Urgent care services, • Dental services, and • Eye care services if available. <p>Promote effective communication between the school, student, and family as a sign of unity and togetherness.</p> <p>Promote health education for the student/family health care needs including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General prevention education, • Proper hand washing techniques, and • Promote good hygiene <p>Provide SBHC services information and enrollment packets to students and families.</p> <p>Effective collaboration and communication between SBHC programs and local primary care providers enhances continuity of care for students and families in the school setting.</p>
	SBHC using Telehealth Services	<p>Use of telehealth to address student health care needs during the school day may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation of parents/guardians in the telehealth visit via a remote access invite from the telehealth originating site. • Telehealth visits provide immediate access to care including the recommended health services and prescribed treatment for students during the school day. <p>Note: The availability of telehealth services in schools promotes continuity of care for students with the expectation of the students' return to the classroom setting as recommended by the telehealth provider.</p> <p>Facilitate effective collaboration and communication with local primary care providers and local pediatricians regarding available school-based telehealth services.</p>

	<p>Types of Telehealth Services Provided and Requirements</p>	<p>The availability of telehealth services in the schools may include care for somatic health, mental health, behavioral health, and substance abuse.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Telehealth services assist in providing continuity of care for students and families during COVID-19 and throughout the re-entry to school phase.• Telehealth services are accessible to students in schools when the following basic components are available:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A dependable and secure internet connection (broadband);• A video platform (custom-configured hardware: telehealth carts, desktop/laptop computers, tablets; and peripheral equipment – digital stethoscopes, probes, vital sign monitors, cameras, etc.); and• Technology support with custom software for documenting patient information in an electronic medical records system (EMR) and technical assistance support necessary for accuracy in the function of the telehealth technology.• All telehealth services must be HIPPA compliant to protect patient privacy. <p>Schools should determine the most cost-effective way to provide dependable, secure telehealth services within the education setting.</p>
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VIII. Continuity of Learning

Each school system has developed a Continuity of Learning Plan to share with staff, students, and community members. These plans inform the public of how distance or remote learning will be provided in their school systems. All local school systems have information posted on their websites. This often includes a message from the superintendent, information regarding meals, and information about distribution of technology or packets of learning content. At least half of the school systems have their Continuity of Learning Plan on their website in a place that is easily accessible to parents and the community.

All plans contain a description of the following:

- An overall description of how continuity of learning will be delivered to all students. This includes their distance learning platform, the technology they have available, and how they accommodate students who do not have access to a device or the internet.
- A description of the roles and responsibilities of district staff, school administrators, teachers, instructional assistants, students and parents.
- A sample teacher's day and student's day is included for elementary, middle and high school students.
- A plan of accountability that identifies how they monitor and assess student performance. This includes how they grade students for the 3rd and 4th quarter.
- A description of how the school system plans to address equity. Included is how they address special education, English Learners, Students with Academic Needs, Homeless Students and Gifted Students.
- A section that identifies the professional development plan for staff.
- A description of the resources available for students is included.

These plans will continue to be an Important component of any school system's Recovery Plan as we need to address social distancing which will result in a modified schedule for students' return to school.

We know from research that face-to-face time with teachers is the most effective means of teaching and learning, however, remote learning will likely remain a component of the instructional program for some time to come. As noted above, each school system's process for remote learning is reflected in their Continuity of Learning Plan and can be found on the MSDE website or on the individual system's website.

APPENDIX A: COVID-19 CHECKLIST

The following checklist is designed to be a simple, yet useful tool in prioritizing system and school needs as school systems plan for the reopening of schools. A checklist can assist in organizing personnel, resources, and stake holders and determining student, faculty, and community needs.

- ☐ Establish a crisis team and outline steps that should occur to implement reopening plans. Decisions may include means of communicating with faculty and staff, communication with community members, communication with board members, updating social media, and social distancing considerations.
- ☐ Make a list of responsibilities and assign individuals to those tasks
- ☐ Determine what the most essential needs are and resolve those issues first.
- ☐ Determine resources on hand and resources that will be needed to successfully transition back to school.
- ☐ Determine professional development, as well as, processes and procedures that will be needed to address concerns created by the pandemic.

- ☐ Develop predetermined responses to questions and concerns that may be asked by community members.
- ☐ Communicate with your constituents and brainstorm effective means of reopening school with them.
- ☐ Explore and determine digital and social media platforms that can utilize to share information.
- ☐ Be prepared to communicate with the press realizing that everything that you share will be of the utmost importance.
- ☐ Maintain regular contact with leaders and policy-makers at the State and local levels.
- ☐ Remain open and receptive to ideas and suggestions.
- ☐ Take action when necessary and utilize the crisis team for reflection and determination of next steps.

APPENDIX B: SCHOOL SYSTEM FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES

Role	Services	Strategies
Local School System Food and Nutrition Services Director: To determine capacity for production and service of student meals	School Food and Nutrition Services: Evaluation of school food service preparation facilities and structures available to continue operations of student meals programs, including factors for safe food handling, federal guidelines for student meals, food supply chain availability, staff safety, etc.	Assess current facilities and identify current capacity for volume of student meal service operations. Document fixed capacity factors such as cold holding equipment, dry food storage area, food preparation space, equipment for transportation of meals inside a school building (such as carts and racks), and equipment for transportation of food and meals between buildings (such as refrigerated trucks, hot and cold holding equipment, food storage bins, etc.). Address feasibility for food service model shift from traditional cafeteria line model to other potential models. Develop models for food service at the Local School System level. Procure additional equipment and supplies as needed.
State and Local Department of Health: To determine maximum number of people per room/gathering, and spacing/social distancing	School Food and Nutrition Services: Operations and logistics models to use for delivery and transportation of food for student meal service (e.g., meals in the classroom; spacing for student seating if meals served in school cafeteria)	Assess logistics and address needs for additional equipment, food safety protocols and staff training, modified packaging, sanitation, point of service reporting, and transportation of food from the food preparation site to classrooms. Utilize model for Breakfast in the Classroom to implement Lunch and/or other meals served in the classroom. Coordinate Food & Nutrition Service Operations with teachers and administrators to determine logistics packaging, transport, and food safety for student meals in the classroom.

<p>Local School System Superintendent, Board of Education, School Administrators, and School Food and Nutrition Directors:</p> <p>To determine intersection of Continuity of Learning Plan and Student Meal Service</p>	<p>School Food and Nutrition Services:</p> <p>Which model to employ for student meal service to accommodate students on campus, in addition to students continuing with distance learning off campus.</p>	<p>Assess logistics and operation needs to address simultaneous operations for on- and off-site student meal delivery during school reopenings.</p> <p>Utilize model for grab and go student meals for consumption at home.</p> <p>Determine a model for continued student meals service for distance learners at the local level.</p> <p>Coordinate Food & Nutrition Services Operations to integrate continuity of student nutrition as a component of the continuity of learning plan.</p>
<p>Maryland State Department of Education Office of School and Community Nutrition Programs (MSDE OSCNP), and Local School System Food and Nutrition Services Director:</p> <p>To ensure program integrity and requirements for State and federally funded School Nutrition Programs</p>	<p>School Food and Nutrition Services:</p> <p>Which USDA Child Nutrition Program regulations and waivers apply to student meal service at the local level during the phased reopening process for schools.</p>	<p>Communicate and facilitate the appropriate Child Nutrition Program and applicable waivers for continuity of student meal service during various stages of distance learning and reopening of school campuses.</p> <p>Address logistics to ensure compliance with program requirements such as meal pattern, point of service for reimbursable meals, food safety, etc.</p> <p>Utilize USDA Foods entitlement dollars for school nutrition programs.</p> <p>Provide technical assistance and support during implementation of recovery and reopening of school nutrition programs at the local level.</p>
<p>Local Department of Health, Local Food and Nutrition Services Director, Local School Administrators and School Nurses: To determine health and safety factors related to Student Nutrition Programs</p>	<p>School Food and Nutrition Services:</p> <p>What new procedures are needed for enhanced sanitation measures, health and safety of School Nutrition Staff, and operations of Student Nutrition Programs during the phased reopening of schools.</p>	<p>Determine enhanced sanitation measures related to student meals service at the local level, including student handwashing on school campuses, appropriate sanitation measures for touch-contact surfaces used by students during meal service in schools (such as point of service touch pads, tables and chairs, carts used in transportation, etc.).</p> <p>Determine health and safety measures at the local level for School Nutrition Staff, such as daily temperature check and a schedule for virus testing, protocols for isolation and containment for prevention of virus outbreak, access to and maintenance of PPE, etc.</p> <p>Document appropriate standard operating procedures and train staff on new protocols.</p>

APPENDIX C: SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY NUTRITION PROGRAMS
ANNOTATED RESOURCES

Topic	Summary	Link
USDA Covid-19 Waivers	<p>A summary of waivers initiated to ease meal service regulations in response to pandemic</p> <p>Visit the home page of OSCNP for additional information</p> <p>http://eatsmartmaryland.org/</p>	<p>From MSDE - Office of School and Community Nutrition Programs (OSCNP)</p> <p>http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/programs/</p>
Roadmap to Recovery: A Public Health Guide for Governors	<p>States will...need to develop plans for a careful, staged reopening that protects the public's health while laying a strong foundation for long-term economic recovery. This report synthesizes and expands upon these expert recommendations by outlining ten key steps and related operational considerations for governors to guide critical decisions in support of the public's health and well-being in the weeks and months ahead.</p>	<p>From National Governors Association</p> <p>https://www.nga.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/NGA-Report.pdf</p>
Masks	<p>When feasible, children age 5 years and older who can wear a cloth face covering safely and consistently should wear a cloth face covering while in the child care center or family child care home in accordance with CDC guidance...</p> <p>... Be removed by the child for meals, snacks, naptime, outdoor play (when social distancing can be maintained) or when it needs to be replaced;</p>	<p>From Maryland Department of Health</p> <p>https://phpa.health.maryland.gov/Documents/MSDE_MDH_face_covering_guidance.pdf</p>
Temperature Checks	<p>If schools could procure digital thermometers and implement ubiquitous testing— especially if the tests are cheap and quick—they might be able to proceed with something like normal operations...a reliance on thermometers at school entrances.</p>	<p>From Forbes Magazine</p> <p>https://www.forbes.com/sites/frederickhess/2020/04/01/what-will-it-take-for-schools-to-reopen/#1edeaecb37ea</p>
Guidelines for Reopening Schools: Montana Health Department	<p>Eat meals in the classroom and other basic considerations and safety protocols (see pages 1-3)</p>	<p>https://www.healthygallatin.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/MT-Reopening-Guidelines-for-Businesses-and-Schools.pdf</p>
Guidelines for Reopening Schools: Minnesota Department of Health	<p>Social distancing guidelines including delivery of meals outside of cafeteria</p>	<p>https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/socialdistance.pdf</p>

Guidelines for Reopening Schools: WHO Guidance on Reopening Schools	Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • checklist for school administrators, teachers and staff • checklist for students and children 	https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/key-messages-and-actions-for-covid-19-prevention-and-control-in-schools-march-2020.pdf?sfvrsn=baf81d52_4
Guidelines for Reopening Schools: CDC- Guidance for Child Care	Recommends meals in classroom versus a cafeteria and other guidelines that can be applied to school settings	https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html
Guidelines for Reopening Schools: White House Phases for Reopening	Schools can begin in Phase Two	https://www.whitehouse.gov/openingamerica/#criteria
Articles on Reopening Schools	An assortment of articles on needed protocols	From Ed Week https://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/campaign-k-12/2020/04/coronavirus-reopen-closed-schools-trump-guidelines.html https://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/campaign-k-12/2020/04/after-white-house-guidance-sch.html From Wall Street Journal https://www.wsj.com/articles/where-schools-reopen-distancing-and-disinfectant-are-the-new-coronavirus-routine-11586971911 From NPR https://www.npr.org/2020/04/24/842528906/what-it-might-look-like-to-safely-reopen-schools?sc=18&f=842528906 From USA Today https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/education/2020/04/29/coronavirus-schools-reopen-online-homeschool/3031945001/

APPENDIX D: HEALTH CONSIDERATIONS FOR SCHOOLS: RESUMING CLASSES

(Prepared and shared by Wendy Donald, BSN RN NCSN Muscatine, Iowa April 2020)

Domain	Considerations/Strategies	Notes
Health Education: Students and Staff	<p>Basic information on COVID-19 (age appropriate. See Notes)</p> <p>Good Hygiene Practices: How is this information delivered to students/staff? Could these general strategies be delivered prior to the restart of school in video form? Replayed once school is in session?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handwashing • Covering coughs and sneezes • Stay home when ill • Temperature <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can temperature monitoring be done at home • What number (or value) is considered a fever <p>Also to be addressed (to reduce fear/anxiety as well)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wearing masks when out in public • Social distancing • What to do if feeling sick or someone in the family unit is ill • What to do if someone in the family unit has been tested/diagnosed with COVID-19 <p>Staff Education: Train staff on the use of the Ill Student/Staff flowchart; use of PPE (including gloves, masks, face shields), taking temperatures and proper handwashing technique. Appropriate environmental cleaning (classroom or Health Office area) would also be beneficial.</p>	<p>Remember that anxiety is increased when something is unknown and is perceived as harmful.</p> <p>Change the “threat” into a “challenge”Reduces the anxiety. Challenge the students to practice good hygiene. Challenge them in selecting a credible news source (such as the CDC) to view daily on accurate updates of COVID-19 activity (age specific intervention)</p> <p>Promote communication between school, student and family. Recognize that families are stressed and that “we are in this together”. “I am on your side”.</p>
Health Office: Ventilation and Physical Set-Up	<p>Proper ventilation is needed for the School Health Office. This could be in the form of a window that could be opened or the use of fans to be able to circulate the air. Could the Health Office be temporarily relocated to an area that provides better ventilation if the current Health Office does not allow for adequate air exchange? Could the use of circulating fans be considered?</p>	<p>Students and school staff that are displaying symptoms of infection need to be separated from healthy students and staff that are utilizing the Health Office for daily medication, first aid treatment, physical injury assessment, etc. Ventilation is part of that strategy. Please see Health Office Management of Ill Persons within the office</p>

<p>Health Office:</p> <p>Management of ill persons within the office</p>	<p>School nurse to wear PPE (mask/face shield) when working with students</p> <p>Health office needs to allow for two spaces for student care.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One space of healthy students coming for routine needs, medication, diabetic checks, first aid/injury assessment, etc. Second space for students/staff who are ill and be evaluated for possible infection **Consider ventilation strategies for this set-up <p>Maintain social distancing between students/staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher may need to notify the nurse if student needs to be sent to the Health Office to make sure office can provide social distancing Provide the classroom with basic first aid supplies to be able to handle some Health Office requests in class Consider the Nurse or Health Associate to do a visit outside the classroom area if Health Office is full Consider an online appointment process to visit the School Health Office. School Nurse would be able to manage the student flow to the Health Office 	<p>Consider temporarily relocating Health Office to a more ventilated location if possible</p> <p>Consider having a first aid/ medication station outside the Health Office to provide services to the “walking well”</p> <p>Caution with aerosolized treatments: Wear mask and gloves during treatments; consider how the location of the treatment when working with a “healthy” versus “sick” child when receiving the treatment. VENTILATION</p>
<p>Health Office:</p> <p>Medical standing orders for management of ill persons within school and returning to school after illness</p>	<p>Developing a flowchart that outlines “when to isolate and send home” will help the School Nurse team (Unlicensed Assistive Personnel) run efficiently and effectively</p> <p>Utilize the Management of Infectious Disease Process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the sick Use Infection protocol to decrease further transmission Refer for further care when indicated <p>Establish a procedure when students/staff arrive to school sick and send home as soon as possible</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> May need to provide transportation to home if parent unable to come for them...identify school staff to help with this <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Resource Officer School/Home Liaison (Resource Navigator) Establish a process for students/staff returning after illness (how many days being fever free without use of medication before be able to return to school) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students/Staff to be sent home from school as soon as possible 	<p>Is a MD note needed for re-entry after out of school due to illness?</p> <p>Receive medical standing orders from local provider(s)</p> <p>At this time (4-2020) schools are not expected to screen students or staff to identify cases of COVID-19</p> <p>What temperature to use? Is there a difference between CDC, WHO, State Public Health Guidance?</p> <p>How to determine accuracy of temperature? If temp is questionable using a non-touch thermometer, do you test by another form...such as tympanic?</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students/Staff with respiratory symptoms and fever over 100.4 (per NASN), it is recommended that a face mask is placed on that individual. The individual will be directed to an area within the Health Office designated for increased isolation to further reduce communicability Returning to school after illness; has the 24 hour fever free without use of fever reducing medication to be extended to 72 hours 	
PPE	<p>Health Office supplies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gloves Face masks Face Shield 	<p>Recommendation is for the Health Office to one complete set containing Face protector, bonnet, booties, gown</p>
Mental Health/ Anxiety Reducing Strategies	<p>There is a false belief in dealing with Anxiety: Worry + Constant Vigilance = Safety. WRONG!</p> <p>We have little control over virus spread, but we can control our actions and reactions</p> <p>Need to take CONTROL of your thought pattern. How do you do this?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay in contact with your medical and/or mental health providers Adhere to your medication regimen Keep an eye on your symptoms and report to your providers when advised Practice Deep Breathing Limit time on social media Manage your information (check in daily with a trusted news source for daily updates) Proper rest and nutrition Maintain a consistent daily schedule/routine Practice good hygiene strategies 	<p>*Acknowledge the situation</p> <p>*Acknowledge/validate the emotions</p> <p>Build a coping toolbox that includes body and mind calming strategies</p> <p>Realize that the resources may not be there to provide a care provider to the home...may have to capitalize on the family's strength. A chaotic family runs on negative emotions and tends to look "on the outside" for help. Help parents be kind to their children</p> <p>We are all in this together/ Choose kindness</p> <p>Young children book recommendations:</p> <p>Grumpy Monkey: Okay to be sad or have unexplained feelings</p>
	<p>Refer to Resource Navigator for student/family services if identified (Remember, services may be limited during this time)</p> <p>REMEMBER: Adult anxiety causes child anxiety; Our demeanor is crucial in keeping anxiety manageable</p>	<p>We're Going on a Bear Hunt: Can't go over or under it; have to go through it</p>

<p>Health Office:</p> <p>Disinfecting Strategies</p>	<p>Use of appropriate disinfectant that has a kill claim for COVID-19 (EPA has a list)</p> <p>Hand washing prior to and after each student interaction or use of alcohol hand sanitizer if soap/water wash is not available</p> <p>Durable medical surfaces, such as cots, to be cleaned between student use; Disposable paper (if used) disposed and replaced after each student use</p> <p>Commonly touched surfaces, such as counters, cleaned with appropriate disinfecting wipes or cleaners after student/staff interaction around that surface area</p>	<p>Thorough cleaning of all surfaces in the Health Area to be done by custodial staff daily</p> <p>Soap and water best option over hand sanitizers.</p> <p>“Deep Cleaning” not necessary; Routine cleaning adequate for this virus</p>
<p>School Building: Illness Monitoring and Management Strategies</p>	<p>Increase space among students during in-person instruction</p> <p>Partial closure (class/grade); Offer online/home instruction</p> <p>Reduce schedule (½ day?)</p> <p>Suspending use of common areas (halls, cafeteria, playground, library, gym, etc) within the school building OR</p> <p>Reducing the load on common areas through altered scheduling</p> <p>Segregating students within common areas (to reduce roaming)</p> <p>Create one-way traffic pattern in hallways (use of signage)</p> <p>Implement standard workplace social distancing measures for teacher and other staff</p> <p>Cancelling classes or activities that occur within the school day with a high rate of mixing/contact (PE, choir, Field trips)</p> <p>Cancel/Postpone after school activities</p> <p>**Look at teachers that travel from one campus to another on the same day</p> <p>If applicable, determine at what point a school would be closed for a set number of days due to illness...For example, when a building reaches 10% absence or greater due to illness, the building is closed for 2 days for cleaning.</p>	<p>Monitor and report absenteeism</p> <p>Staggering start times for school</p> <p>School-wide temperature monitoring upon arrival</p> <p>Use of PPE within the school</p> <p>Disinfecting Strategies for the classroom/common areas</p> <p>½ day classes</p> <p>½ student population in school at one time</p> <p>Consider class or grade closure and suspension of common building areas for illness rather than a whole school closure. Per research, this has a smaller mitigation effect, but does lead to reduction of a large-scale outbreak.</p>
<p>School Building and Bussing:</p> <p>Disinfecting Strategies</p>	<p>Clean the bus prior to and after each route; reduce number of students in the bus at one time to maintain some social distancing.</p>	<p>When social/physical distancing can not be achieved; consider PPE (wearing face masks) to reduce transmission</p>

School Building and Bussing: Maintain Social Distancing	Stagger bus times to allow for cleaning between routes Reduce mixing during transport Use of PPE (masks) Reduce number of students on bus at one time Disinfection strategies; clean bus prior to and after transport. Consider suspending bus services	½ day classes ½ student population in school or on bus at one time Use of PPE while on bus
At Risk/Vulnerable Student and Staff Population	Refer students/staff that are considered “high risk” to their medical provider to determine when school re-entry for their individual health concern is recommended	Immunocompromised population
Students who are unable to wear PPE and/or can not maintain social distance while in the classroom setting		Symptomatic versus asymptomatic Potential for contact with an ill person or no contact ...does this matter?

APPENDIX E: RECOVERY RESOURCES

General

Maryland State Department of Education: [COVID-19 Resources for Maryland Schools](https://marylandpublicschools.org/newsroom/Pages/COVID-19/index.aspx) – this website contains all of the COVID – 19 resources and information posted by MSDE

<https://marylandpublicschools.org/newsroom/Pages/COVID-19/index.aspx>

The report proposes that leaders of education systems and organizations develop plans for the continuation of education through alternate modalities, during the period of necessary social isolation. It offers a framework of areas to be covered by such plans.

https://globaled.gse.harvard.edu/files/geii/files/framework_guide_v2.pdf

Council of Chief State School Officers on a Framework to assist with the restart of schools

<https://ccsso.org/blog/ccsso-releases-framework-assist-state-education-leaders-planning-restart-schools>

Information from the Education Commission of the States regarding actions of states across the country related to the pandemic.

<https://www.ecs.org/covid-19-update/>

Includes a plan prepared by the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) to safely open America's schools

https://www.aft.org/sites/default/files/covid19_reopen-america-schools.pdf

Minnesota Department of Health Guidance on Social Distancing in School Settings

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/socialdistance.pdf>

Building Preparation and Services

CDC documents on cleaning/disinfecting public spaces buildings and preparing to open schools:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/reopen-guidance.html>
- https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/pdf/ReOpening_America_Cleaning_Disinfection_Decision_Tool.pdf
- https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/reopen-guidance.html?deliveryName=USCDC_2067-DM26911

Instructional/Academics

The United States Department of Education (USDE) has provided the following resources to help support states and local school systems support students with disabilities:

- [DOE Fact Sheet Addressing the Risk of COVID-19 in Schools While Protecting the Civil Rights of Students](#) (March 16, 2020)
- [Supplemental Fact Sheet: Addressing the Risk of COVID-19 in Preschool, Elementary, and Secondary Schools While Serving Children with Disabilities](#) (March 21, 2020)
- [Non-Regulatory Guidance on Flexibility and Waivers for Grantees and Program Participants Impacted by Federally Declared Disasters](#) (September 2018)

- [DOE OSERS: Dear Colleague Letter re: Virtual Schools](#) (August 5, 2016)

Division of Early Intervention and Special Education Services Technical Assistance Bulletins:

- [Serving Children with Disabilities under IDEA during School Closures due to the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
- [Providing Continuity of Learning to Students with Disabilities through Nonpublic Schools during COVID-19](#)
- [Serving Blind or Low Vision, Deaf or Hard of Hearing or Deaf/Blind Students during COVID-19](#)
- [Navigating Secondary Transition Services for Students with Disabilities during COVID-19](#)
- [Continuity of the IFSP for Young Children \(Birth – Age 4\) with Developmental Delays/Disabilities and their Families during Extended School/Agency Closure due to the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
- [Providing Continuity of Learning for Students with Disabilities who require Extensive, Intensive, Individualized Instruction and Support during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
- [A Parents' Guide: Navigating Special Education during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
- [Supporting Students with Disabilities During COVID-19 and Afterwards: A Guide for Emotional Well-Being](#)

Health, Wellness, Social, and Behavioral

Role of the School Nurse in Returning to School Planning

https://higherlogicdownload.s3.amazonaws.com/NASN/3870c72d-fff9-4ed7-833f-215de278d256/UploadedImages/PDFs/COVID-19_Interim_Guidance_Role_of_the_School_Nurse_in_Return_to_School_Planning.pdf

Considerations for Reopening Schools – key steps and elements to consider when opening schools

<file:///C:/Users/mgable/Downloads/McKinsey%20COVID19%20response%20Reopening%20schools%20Webinar%20vF.PDF>

Maryland Department of Health – MDH website for all health related information

<https://health.maryland.gov/pages/home.aspx>

Plan Ahead to Support the Transition-back of Students, Families, and Staff – addresses social emotional supports, identification of students who are not adjusting, transition during the early weeks, etc.

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/newsletter/spring20.pdf>

Minnesota Department of Health Guidance on Social Distancing in School Settings – provides information on social distancing in the classroom, safe spaces for students, and staff, etc.

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/socialdistance.pdf>

Division of Curriculum, Instructional Improvement and Professional Learning

<http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/programs/Documents/ITSLM/ParentResources.pdf>

(This resource provides information for parents to support students at home.)

<http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/programs/Documents/ITSLM/TeacherResources.pdf>

(This resource provides information to support teachers in developing their classroom lessons.)

Child Care

MSDE's information on childcare

<https://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/>

MSDE's Frequently Asked Questions on Child Care

<https://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/covid-faqs>

APPENDIX F: STAKEHOLDERS

Thank you to members of our stakeholder group, who reviewed this Education Recovery Plan and offered valuable insight and input.