STRONGER TOGETHER

A GUIDEBOOK FOR THE SAFE REOPENING OF CALIFORNIA'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS

California Department of Education
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STRONGER TOGETHER: FOREWORD BY THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Greetings educational leaders, teachers, classified staff, parents, students, and all Californians:

The effects felt by COVID-19 have been widespread and created impacts unlike anything that we've ever seen. I want to commend the people of California for your resilience and the quick manner in which you moved into distance learning. Thank you for all that you've done to help keep California's students safe and able to continue learning.

As we prepare to move into the likely reopening of our schools, we provide this guidance as a "how to" for safely reopening our schools. In it you will find answers to many questions, including the need for physical distancing and types of recommended personal protective equipment. You'll also learn ways that we will have to rearrange our staff and students in order to ensure that those who are opting for in-person instruction can do so safely.

It has been my honor to lead a statewide reopening schools task force that created a participatory process for our educators and stakeholders to lend their voices. This guidance is also informed by the technical assistance and advice of many health and safety organizations including the Centers for Disease Control, California Department of Public Health, California Division of Occupational Safety and Health, and the many health officers from counties around our state. I want to thank the Governor's Office and our partners in the Legislature for their support in this endeavor, and all the staff at the California Department of Education (CDE) who have written and contributed their expertise throughout this document. I especially want to thank Dr. Stephanie Gregson, the Chief Deputy Superintendent at CDE, who served as its chief writer and editor.

We gathered additional input from focus group conversations with teachers, classified staff, child care providers, superintendents, and public health officials. Important voices were heard during virtual support circles with educators, parents, and students. And additional insight came from consultation with state superintendents, researchers, and experts from throughout the nation. Thank you to all those who took time to help review this document, and I look forward to the next steps of our work together to implement this guidance safely.

We know that guidance is only as good as its implementation, so think of this as the beginning of the conversation—not the end. We know that for many of us, this is the toughest challenge that we'll ever face, perhaps in our lifetime. But when it comes to ensuring that California students continue receiving a high-quality education—and doing so safely—we must rise to meet the challenge. Californians, I'm inspired by how you have come together to make it this far.

I couldn't be prouder to be your state superintendent. We are stronger together, we can do more together, and I thank you for all you are doing together to support our 6.2 million students.

Tony Thurmond
State Superintendent of Public Instruction

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic affected entire communities, states, and the world and led us on a journey none of us thought we would experience in our lifetime. Our communities and families have experienced physical, emotional, health, and financial strains. The high levels of stress and trauma experienced during this time have highlighted the resiliency, strength, and power of ourselves and the importance of our school communities.

We know our local educational agencies (LEAs) are all working collaboratively with their local county health officials and community partners to plan on how to safely reopen schools. **The intent of this document is to be a guide for local discussion on reopening schools.** It is not a "one-size-fits-all" document; rather, it is a document that honors the varied local contexts of each of our LEAs. This guidance document was developed with the most current information known at the time and may be updated as new data becomes relevant. This guide will provide checklists, essential questions for consideration, and examples of best practices. Guidance on standards for quality distance learning is currently being developed by the CDE and will be available on our website. While the guidance by its nature is not a mandate, this guidance serves as a "how to" for LEAs as they plan to safely reopen. LEAs need to work with their local health departments and local stakeholders to ensure that their protocols align with the most current scientific knowledge and community expectations. It is also reasonable to expect that the protocols schools implement will change as the local conditions change.

What has been highlighted during this pandemic is the importance of paying attention to the social–emotional well-being of our students, families, and staff. We encourage all LEAs to keep the emotional well-being of all at the forefront of their decision making. This is also a time to reflect on systems that may not have worked for every child, and we encourage you to please continue to eliminate the barriers to student success that existed before the closure. All of this is difficult work and each LEA should work to be inclusive and collaborative from the start of their planning with community stakeholders (i.e., students, families, teachers, staff, local bargaining representatives, school advisory councils, and other partners). LEAs have an opportunity to align and connect their reopening plans with tools such as the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) and safety plans while utilizing inclusive, distributive, and collaborative leadership grounded in continuous improvement. We have an unprecedented opportunity to improve how we care for and educate each child. Let's work to enhance the public good of our public schools as we implement new, more student-centered designs.

TIMELINE OF THE CDE COVID-19 RESPONSE AND ACTIVITIES

This is a brief overview of key dates and the response efforts of the California Department of Education (CDE).

MARCH 2020

13 Governor Gavin Newsom issues Executive Order N-26-20, ensuring state funding for schools even in event of physical closure.

17 In coordination with the Department of Health and Human Services, CDE releases guidance on distance learning, child nutrition, and child care.

18 Governor Newsom issues Executive Order N-30-20, suspending standardized testing for local educational agencies to take appropriate actions to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic while California pursued a federal waiver of testing requirements.

19 Governor Newsom issues a stay at home order for the entire state.

20 CDE releases special education guidance to support students with disabilities.

26 The US Department of Education issues informal approval of Assessment Waiver; joint request from CDE and the California State Board of Education.

31 State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond releases a recommendation letter to all schools in the state to consider closing physical campuses to ensure the safety of students and staff through the end of the 2019–20 school year.

APRIL 2020

1 CDE releases guidance on graduation and grading requirements.

1 CDE releases Labor Management Framework established by the Labor Management Task Force facilitated by SSPI Thurmond.

1 Superintendent Thurmond announces Senate Bill (SB) 117 funding is available to school districts.

2 The California State Board of Education, CDE, California State University, University of California, California Community Colleges, and the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities issue a joint statement to waive entrance requirements for college-bound seniors and juniors.

4 Governor Newsom issues Executive Order N-45-20 for child care.

4 CDE partners with the Californians Dedicated to Education Foundation (CDE Foundation), to create the California Bridging the Digital Divide Fund to provide technology supports to students without devices and internet connectivity.

7 Governor Newsom issues Executive Order N-47-20 for child care.

8 CDE releases guidance on child care.

9 Superintendent Thurmond establishes ad hoc committees to meet the most urgent needs for students: loss of learning, closing the achievement gap, supply, and distance learning.

9 Superintendent Thurmond creates "Closing the Digital Divide" task force to provide students with technology to support distance learning and move towards closing the digital divide. As a result, internet service providers guaranteed free and low-cost internet to students who did not previously have access to it.

27 Superintendent Thurmond establishes a series of support circles to provide resources and comfort to educators, parents, and students.

29 Superintendent Thurmond establishes a reopening schools task force comprised of educational partners, labor and union leaders, legislative partners, and educators to drive the conversation that led to the development of this guidance document.

To date, CDE Nutrition Services has received and approved more than 5,000 emergency meal waivers to continue providing meals to students and their families even though schools have physically closed. In addition to this work, since mid-March, CDE has created, planned, and hosted more than 30 webinars focusing on the following subject matter areas: distance learning, special education, mental health, English learners, deaf and blind student and educator supports, nutrition services, federal funding supports, child care, and career technical education.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The health and safety of students and staff is the top priority when making the decision to physically reopen school campuses for use by students, staff, and others. Local educational agencies should work in collaboration with their local health officials in making the decision to safely reopen. Per CDC recommendations, the CDE recommends all staff and students should wear cloth face coverings or face shields while at school or on a bus, and maintain 6 feet of physical distance during school activities.

When the decision is made to reopen, LEAs will need to establish clear plans and protocols to ensure the safety of students and staff. Knowing that there is not a "one-size-fits-all" solution for opening schools across California's 1,000 LEAs, the CDE has created a comprehensive checklist of health and safety items that LEAs should use to guide the important reopening decisions they will be making. This checklist was developed in consultation with the California Department of Public Health, the California Division of Occupational Safety and Health, school labor and management representatives, California LEAs, and officials from other states to provide a comprehensive menu of considerations for LEAs.

While the checklist focuses on statewide guidance, the final decision to reopen will be made by each LEA working in close collaboration with local health officials and community stakeholders, including families, staff, and labor partners. When a school is reopened, it is important that LEAs continue to communicate with local and state authorities to monitor current disease levels and the capacities of the local health providers and health care systems. Items in the checklist will likely require collaboration between labor and management groups and in some cases a revisit of existing bargaining agreements. These are matters that would be resolved as part of the reopening planning process and prior to school starting so as to provide clarity for reopening. This checklist will support LEA leaders in their ongoing collaboration with their school communities and health professionals about reopening strategies.

The following checklist covers the following main categories:

1. Local Conditions to Guide Reopening Decisions
2. Plan to Address Positive COVID-19 Cases or Community Surges
3. Injury and Illness Prevention Plan
4. Campus Access
5. Hygiene
6. Protective Equipment
7. Physical Distancing
8. Cleaning/Disinfecting
9. Employee Issues
10. Communication with Students, Parents, Employees, Public Health Officials, and the Community

CDE HEALTH AND SAFETY CHECKLIST

LEA Checklist for Physically Reopening Campuses for Students

☑ **Local Conditions.** Ensure that the following local conditions are in place:

- **a.** Flexibility or Lifting of State Stay-Home Order
  - **i.** The state has lifted or relaxed the stay-home order to allow schools to physically reopen.
- **b.** Flexibility or Lifting of County Stay-Home Order
  - **i.** The county has lifted or relaxed the stay-home or shelter-in-place order to allow schools to physically reopen.
- **c.** Local Public Health Clearance. Local public health officials have made determinations, including, but not limited to, the following:
  - **i.** Testing Availability. Consult with local public health officials to ensure adequate tests and tracking/tracing resources are available for schools to reopen. Employees have access to COVID-19 testing at regular and ongoing intervals.
  - **ii.** Sufficient duration of decline or stability of confirmed cases, hospitalizations, and deaths.
  - **iii.** Sufficient surge capacity exists in local hospitals.
- **d.** Equipment Availability
  - **i.** Have sufficient protective equipment to comply with California Department of Public Health (CDPH) guidance for students and staff appropriate for each classification or duty, as well as relevant California Division of Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal/OSHA) requirements.
  - **ii.** Have a plan for an ongoing supply of protective equipment.
  - **iii.** Purchase a sufficient number of no-touch thermal scan thermometers for symptom screenings.
  - **iv.** Consider the differing requirements of PPE/EPG for the differing populations of students with disabilities (i.e., for those requiring medical procedures, toileting, lifting and mobility assistance).
- **e.** Cleaning Supply Availability
  - **i.** Have enough school-appropriate cleaning supplies to continuously disinfect the school site in accordance with CDPH guidance.
  - **ii.** Ensure sufficient supplies of hand sanitizers, soap, handwashing stations, tissues, no-touch trash cans, and paper towels.

☑ **Plan to Address Positive COVID-19 Cases or Community Surges**

- **a.** Establish a plan to close schools again for physical attendance of students, if necessary, based on public health guidance and in coordination with local public health officials.
- **b.** In accordance with CDPH guidance, when a student, teacher, or staff member or a member of their household tests positive for COVID-19 and has exposed others at the school implement the following steps:
  - **i.** In consultation with the local public health officials, the appropriate school official may consider whether school closure is warranted and length of time based on the risk level within the specific community as determined by the local public health officer.

ii. In accordance with standard guidance for isolation at home after close contact, the classroom or office where the COVID-19-positive individual was based will typically need to close temporarily as students or staff isolate.
iii. Additional close contacts at school outside of a classroom should also isolate at home.
iv. Additional areas of the school visited by the COVID-19-positive individual may also need to be closed temporarily for cleaning and disinfection.
v. Develop a plan for continuity of education, medical and social services, and meal programs and establish alternate mechanisms for these to continue.

☑ **Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP)**

a. Update the IIPP to address unique circumstances during the COVID-19 crisis and make updates accessible to employees and parents.

☑ **Campus Access.** Develop a plan to minimize access to campus, and limit nonessential visitors, facility use permits, and volunteers.

a. Exclude any student, parent, caregiver, visitor, or staff showing symptoms of COVID-19 (reference CDC and CDPH guidelines for COVID-19 symptoms). Staff should discuss with the parent or caregiver and refer to the student's health history form or emergency card to identify whether the student has a history of allergies, which would not be a reason to exclude.
b. Monitor staff and students throughout the day for signs of illness. Determine any special or unique needs for students with disabilities related to planned district or schoolwide procedures.
c. Students—Entering Campuses
   i. Passive Screening. Instruct parents to screen students before leaving for school (check temperature to ensure temperatures below 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit, observe for symptoms outlined by public health officials) and to keep students at home if they have symptoms consistent with COVID-19 or if they have had close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19.
   ii. Active Screening. Engage in symptom screening as students enter campus and buses, consistent with public health guidance, which includes visual wellness checks and temperature checks with no-touch thermometers (check temperature to ensure temperatures below 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit), and ask all students about COVID-19 symptoms within the last 24 hours and whether anyone in their home has had COVID-19 symptoms or a positive test.
      1. If a thermometer requiring a touch method (under the tongue or arm, forehead, etc.) is the only type available, it should only be used when a fever is suspected and caution is taken by temperature screeners, such as by wearing gloves, eye protection, and a mask.
      2. Thermometers must be properly cleaned and disinfected after each use.
   iii. All students must wash or sanitize hands as they enter campuses and buses.
   iv. Provide supervised, sufficient points of access to avoid larger gatherings.
   v. Use privacy boards or clear screens when practicable.
   vi. If a student is symptomatic while entering campus or during the school day:
      1. Students who develop symptoms of illness while at school should be separated from others right away, preferably isolated in an area through which others do not enter or pass. If more than one student is in an isolation area, ensure physical distancing.

2. Any students or staff exhibiting symptoms should be required to immediately wear a face covering and wait in an isolation area until they can be transported home or to a health care facility.
3. Students should remain in isolation with continued supervision and care until picked up by an authorized adult.
4. Follow established guidelines for triaging students in the health office, recognizing not all symptoms are COVID-19 related.
5. Advise parents of sick students that students are not to return until they have met CDC criteria to discontinue home isolation.

vii. Develop a plan for if students are symptomatic when boarding the bus.

viii. Protect and support students who are at higher risk for severe illness (medical conditions that the CDC says may have increased risks) or who cannot safely distance from household contacts at higher risk by providing options such as virtual learning or independent study.

d. Staff—Entering Campuses
   i. Passive Screening. Instruct staff to self-screen before leaving for work (check temperature to ensure temperatures below 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit, check for symptoms outlined by public health officials) and to stay home if they have symptoms consistent with COVID-19 or if they have had close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19.
   ii. Active Screening. Engage in symptom screening as staff enter worksites, consistent with public health guidance, which includes visual wellness checks and temperature checks with no-touch thermometers (check temperature to ensure temperatures below 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit), and ask all staff about COVID-19 symptoms within the last 24 hours and whether anyone in their home has had COVID-19 symptoms or a positive test.
      1. If a thermometer requiring a touch method (under the tongue or arm, forehead, etc.) is the only type available, it should only be used when a fever is suspected.
      2. Thermometers must be properly cleaned and disinfected after each use.
   iii. All staff must wash or sanitize hands as they enter worksites.
   iv. Exclude employees who are exhibiting symptoms from the workplace.
      1. Staff members who develop symptoms of illness should be sent to medical care. Have emergency substitute plans in place.
      2. Create a procedure for reporting the reasons for the exclusions.
      3. Advise sick staff members not to return until they have met CDC criteria to discontinue home isolation.
e. Outside Visitors and Groups
   i. Limit access to campus for parents and other visitors.
   ii. Evaluate whether and to what extent external community organizations can safely utilize the site and campus resources. Ensure external community organizations that use the facilities also follow the school's health and safety plans and CDPH guidance.
   iii. Review facility use agreements and establish common facility protocols for all users of the facility.
   iv. Establish protocol for accepting deliveries safely.

v. Charter School Co-locations
   1. Update facility use agreements to address unique circumstances during the COVID-19 crisis, ensuring that organizations that are using the same facility have agreed to the same understandings about how to reopen in a healthy and safe way. Establish a protocol for responding to site concerns regarding health and safety issues that arise during the pandemic that is collaborative and meets the needs of all stakeholders.

☑ **Hygiene.** Plan to address hygiene practices to ensure personal health and safety in school facilities and vehicles.

a. Handwashing. In accordance with CDPH and Cal/OSHA guidance and in consultation with local public health officials, develop a plan for handwashing that includes:
   i. Providing opportunities for students and staff to meet handwashing frequency guidance.
   ii. Ensuring sufficient access to handwashing and sanitizer stations. Consider portable handwashing stations throughout a site and near classrooms to minimize movement and congregations in bathrooms to the extent possible.
   iii. Ensuring fragrance-free hand sanitizer (with a minimum of 60 percent alcohol) is available and supervised at or near all workstations and on buses. Children under age nine should use hand sanitizer under adult supervision. Call Poison Control if consumed: 1-800-222-1222. Note: frequent handwashing is more effective than the use of hand sanitizers.
b. Train staff and students on proper handwashing techniques and PPE/EPG use, including the following:
   i. Scrub with soap for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not accessible. Staff and students should use paper towels (or single use cloth towels) to dry hands thoroughly.
   ii. Wash hands when: arriving and leaving home; arriving at and leaving school; after playing outside; after having close contact with others; after using shared surfaces or tools; before and after using restroom; after blowing nose, coughing, and sneezing; and before and after eating and preparing foods.
   iii. CDC guidance on proper PPE use.
c. Teach staff and students to:
   i. Use tissue to wipe the nose and cough and sneeze inside the tissue.
   ii. Not touch the face or face covering.

☑ **Protective Equipment.** Plan to address protective equipment needs to ensure personal health and safety in school facilities and vehicles.

a. According to CDC guidance:
   i. Training and information should be provided to staff and students on proper use, removal, and washing of cloth face coverings.
   ii. Face coverings are not recommended for anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the covering without assistance. LEAs should make reasonable accommodations such as a face shield with a cloth drape for those who are unable to wear face coverings for medical reasons. Per Cal/OSHA, considerations for face shields should include a cloth drape attached across the bottom and tucked into shirt.

iii. Cloth face coverings are meant to protect other people in case the wearer is unknowingly infected (many people carry COVID-19 but do not have symptoms). Cloth face coverings are not surgical masks, respirators, or personal protective equipment.

b. Staff Protective Equipment
   i. As recommended by the CDC, all staff should wear face coverings. Per CDPH guidance, teachers could use face shields, which enable students to see their faces and to avoid potential barriers to phonological instruction.
   ii. Provide masks if the employee does not have a clean face covering.
   iii. Provide other protective equipment, as appropriate for work assignments.
      1. For employees engaging in symptom screening, provide surgical masks, face shields, and disposable gloves.
      2. For front office and food service employees, provide face coverings and disposable gloves.
      3. For custodial staff, provide equipment and PPE for cleaning and disinfecting, including:
         A. For regular surface cleaning, provide gloves appropriate for all cleaning and disinfecting.
         B. Classified staff engaged in deep cleaning and disinfecting should be equipped with proper PPE for COVID-19 disinfection (disposable gown, gloves, eye protection, and mask or respirator) in addition to PPE as required by product instructions. All products must be kept out of children's reach and stored in a space with restricted access.
         C. Cal/OSHA requires that PPE be provided and worn to effectively protect employees from the hazards of the cleaning products used and training be provided to staff on the hazards of chemicals.

c. Student Protective Equipment
   i. Students should use cloth face coverings, especially in circumstances when physical distancing cannot be maintained. If an LEA requires students to wear face coverings, then the LEA must provide face coverings to be used. Consider how the LEA will address students with disabilities who refuse or are not able to wear masks. At a minimum, face coverings should be worn:
      1. While waiting to enter the school campus.
      2. While on school grounds (except when eating or drinking).
      3. While leaving school.
      4. While on a school bus.
         A. Driver has access to surplus masks to provide to students who are symptomatic on the bus.

☑ **Physical Distancing.** Plan to meet physical distancing standards in school facilities and vehicles. Clearly define how staff can honor physical distancing recommendations, yet meet student medical, personal, or support needs. Determine how adequate space and facilities will be utilized to maintain health and safety of students and staff, especially when tending to individual student medical or personal needs.

a. Plan to limit the number of people in all campus spaces to the number that can be reasonably accommodated while maintaining a minimum of 6 feet of distance between individuals. (6 feet is the current minimum recommendation for physical distancing from the CDC, but it is important to pay attention to future modifications in public health recommendations.)

b. To the extent possible, and as recommended by the CDC, attempt to create smaller student/educator cohorts to minimize the mixing of student groups throughout the day. Minimize movement of students, educators, and staff as much as possible.

c. In a circumstance where sufficient physical distancing is difficult or impossible, such as when students enter or exit a school bus in proximity to the bus driver, all individuals, including staff and students, should wear face coverings that cover the mouth and nose consistent with public health guidance. To be clear, face coverings are not a replacement for physical distancing, but they should be used to mitigate virus spread when physical distancing is not feasible.

d. Student Physical Distancing. LEAs should plan to:

   i. Limit number of students physically reporting to school, if needed to maintain physical distancing.

      1. Determine student and staff capacity of each school meeting 6-foot physical distancing objectives.
      2. Consider various strategies outlined in the Instructional Program Models in the guidance document, such as early/late start times and blended learning models.

   ii. The CDC recommends virtual activities in lieu of field trips and intergroup events.

   iii. Post signage and install barriers to direct traffic around campus.

   iv. Buses

      1. Determine maximum capacity for students of each vehicle while meeting 6-foot physical distancing objectives.
      2. Create a plan for seating based on maximum capacity determined above, and develop a plan for bus routes that accommodates the capacity limitations. Mark or block seats that must be left vacant. Sample seating options:
         A. Option 1: Seat one student to a bench on both sides of the bus, skipping every other row.
         B. Option 2: Seat one student to a bench, alternating rows on each side to create a zigzag pattern on the bus.
      3. Instruct students and parents to maintain 6-foot distancing at bus stops and while loading and unloading.
      4. Seat students from the rear of the bus forward to prevent students from walking past each other. To prevent students from walking past one another, afternoon runs should be boarded based on the order in which students will be dropped off. (Students who get off first should board last and sit in the front.)
      5. Students and staff should wear face coverings at bus stops and on buses.

   v. Playgrounds/Outside Spaces/Athletics

      1. Increase supervision to ensure physical distancing.
      2. Physical education (PE) and intramural/interscholastic athletics should be limited to activities that do not involve physical contact with other students or equipment until advised otherwise by state/local public health officials.

   vi. Classrooms

      1. Determine maximum capacity for students of each classroom while meeting 6-foot physical distancing objectives.

2. In accordance with CDC and CDPH guidance, ensure desks are a minimum of 6 feet apart and arrange desks in a way that minimizes face-to-face contact.
3. If necessary, utilize other campus spaces for instructional activities (e.g., lecture halls, gyms, auditoriums, cafeterias, outdoors).
4. If necessary, broadcast to other classrooms and students distance learning at home.
5. Increase staffing to ensure physical distancing for younger students and students with special needs.
6. Arrange developmentally appropriate activities for smaller group activities and rearrange furniture and play spaces to maintain separation, when possible.
7. Address physical distancing objectives as students move between classrooms.
8. Address potential issues from physical distancing rules that could result in unintended segregation of students with disabilities on campuses away from peers without disabilities.

vii. Food Service

1. Consider strategies to limit physical interaction during meal preparation and meal service (e.g., serving meals in classrooms, increasing meal service access points, staggering cafeteria use).
2. Suspend use of share tables and self-service buffets for food and condiments.
3. Install physical barriers, such as sneeze guards and partitions, at point of sale and other areas where maintaining physical distance of 6 feet is difficult.
4. With an approved National School Lunch Program waiver, offer meal delivery for students quarantined or in a home-based cohort.
5. If providing meal service in classrooms, plan for cleaning and trash removal.

e. Staff

i. Develop a plan that ensures physical distancing among staff in their work environment to reduce spread of the virus that includes:

1. Avoiding staff congregation in work environments, break rooms, staff rooms, and bathrooms.
2. Avoiding grouping staff together for training or staff development. Consider conducting the training virtually or, if in-person, ensure distancing is maintained.

ii. Adjust staff schedules (through negotiations) to accommodate new student schedules and physical distancing strategies.

iii. In accordance with Cal/OSHA regulations and guidance, evaluate all workspaces to ensure that employees can maintain physical distancing to the extent possible.

1. Where possible, rearrange workspaces to incorporate a minimum of 6 feet between employees and students.
2. If physical distancing between workspaces or between employees and students and visitors is not possible, add physical barriers that cannot be moved to separate workspaces.

☑ **Cleaning and Disinfecting.** Plan to meet cleanliness and disinfecting standards in school facilities and vehicles.

a. Overall Cleanliness Standards. Schools must meet high cleanliness standards prior to reopening and maintain a high level during the school year.

b. In accordance with CDC guidance, avoid sharing of electronic devices, toys, books, and other games or learning aids.
c. Limit stuffed animals and any other toys that are difficult to clean and sanitize.
d. In accordance with CDC and California Department of Pesticide Regulation (CDPR) guidance, and in consultation with local public health officials, develop a plan that includes:
    i. A safe and correct application of disinfectants using personal protective equipment and ventilation recommended for cleaning.
    ii. Disinfecting surfaces between uses, such as:
        1. Desks and tables
        2. Chairs
        3. Seats on bus
        4. Keyboards, phones, headsets, copy machines
    iii. Disinfecting frequently—at least daily—high-touch surfaces, such as:
        1. Door handles
        2. Handrails
        3. Drinking fountains
        4. Sink handles
        5. Restroom surfaces
        6. Toys, games, art supplies, instructional materials
        7. Playground equipment
    iv. When choosing disinfecting products, using those approved for use against COVID-19 on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) List N: Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2 and follow product instructions.
        1. To reduce the risk of asthma related to disinfecting, programs should aim to select disinfectant products on the EPA List N with asthma-safer ingredients (hydrogen peroxide, citric acid, or lactic acid).
        2. Avoid products that mix these ingredients with peroxyacetic acid, sodium hypochlorite (bleach), or quaternary ammonium compounds, which can cause asthma.
        3. Use disinfectants labeled to be effective against emerging viral pathogens, following label directions for appropriate dilution rates and contact times.
    v. When cleaning, airing out the space before children arrive. Plan to do thorough cleaning when children are not present.
    vi. Closing off areas used by any sick person and not using before cleaning and disinfection. To reduce risk of exposure, wait 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. If it is not possible to wait 24 hours, wait as long as possible.
e. Make a Plan for Adequate Outdoor Air Circulation
    i. In accordance with CDC guidance, ensure that ventilation systems and fans operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible by opening windows and doors and other methods. Do not open windows and doors if doing so poses a safety or health risk to children using the facility (for example, allowing pollen in or exacerbating asthma

symptoms). Maximize central air filtration for heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems (targeted filter rating of at least MERV 13).

f. Take steps to ensure that all water systems and features (e.g., drinking fountains, decorative fountains) are safe to use after a prolonged facility shutdown to minimize the risk of Legionnaires' disease and other diseases associated with water.

g. Keep each child's belongings separated and in an individually labeled storage container, cubby, or area. Send belongings home each day to be cleaned.

☑ **Employee Issues.** Engage employees on COVID-19 plans and provide necessary training and accommodations.

a. Revisit existing bargaining agreement.

i. Engage the exclusive representatives of labor groups and work collaboratively in tailoring bargaining agreements to address the relevant employee issues in this checklist. Ideally, these are matters that would be resolved as part of the reopening planning process and prior to school starting so as to provide clarity for reopening.

ii. Create a plan for future bargaining that may be necessary as additional issues arise.

b. Staffing Ratios

i. Ensure staffing levels are sufficient to meet unique facility cleanliness, physical distancing, student learning, and health and safety needs to address COVID-19.

ii. Consider rolling staff cohorts to meet needs and avoid overwork.

c. Develop and provide staff training or utilize state-provided training on:

i. Disinfecting frequency and tools and chemicals used in accordance with the Healthy Schools Act, CDPR guidance, and Cal/OSHA regulations. For staff who use hazardous chemicals for cleaning, specialized training is required.

ii. Physical distancing of staff and students.

iii. Symptom screening, including temperature checks.

iv. Updates to the Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP).

v. State and local health standards and recommendations, including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Proper use of protective equipment, including information on limitations of some face coverings that do not protect the wearer and are not PPE but can help protect people near the wearer. Face coverings do not replace the need for physical distancing and frequent handwashing. Cloth face coverings are most essential when physical distancing is not possible. Also include training on removal and washing of cloth face coverings.

2. Cough and sneeze etiquette.

3. Keeping one's hands away from one's face.

4. Frequent handwashing and proper technique.

5. Confidentiality around health recording and reporting.

vi. Training for school health staff on clinical manifestations of COVID-19, pediatric presentations, and CDC transmission-based precautions.

vii. Training on trauma-informed practices and suicide prevention.

d. Designate a staff liaison or liaisons to be responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns. Employees should know who they are and how to contact them.
e. Reasonable Accommodations
    i. Protect and support staff who are at higher risk for severe illness (medical conditions that the CDC says may have increased risks) or who cannot safely distance from household contacts at higher risk by providing options such as telework or negotiated change in classification or duties.
    ii. If reasonable accommodations are not practicable, the LEA should work with the employee to develop a flexible leave plan that endeavors to avoid exhausting the employee's earned leave.

☑ **Communication with Students, Parents, Employees, Public Health Officials, and the Community**

a. School leaders should engage stakeholders, including families, staff, and labor partners in the school community, to formulate and implement the plans in this checklist.
b. Communicate to staff, students, and parents about new, COVID-19-related protocols, including:
    i. Proper use of PPE/EPG.
    ii. Cleanliness and disinfection.
    iii. Transmission prevention.
    iv. Guidelines for families about when to keep students home from school.
    v. Systems for self-reporting symptoms.
    vi. Criteria and plan to close schools again for physical attendance of students.
c. Target communication for vulnerable members of the school community.
d. Create a communications plan for if a school has a positive COVID-19 case.
    i. Address the school's role in documenting, reporting, tracking, and tracing infections in coordination with public health officials.
    ii. Notify staff and families immediately of any possible cases of COVID-19. Review legal responsibilities and privacy rights for communicating about cases of the virus.
    iii. Provide guidance to parents, teachers, and staff reminding them of the importance of community physical distancing measures while a school is closed, including discouraging students or staff from gathering elsewhere.
    iv. Provide information to parents regarding labor laws, Disability Insurance, Paid Family Leave, and Unemployment Insurance.
    v. Advise sick staff members and children not to return until they have met CDC criteria to discontinue home isolation.
    vi. Inform those who have had close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19 to stay home and self-monitor for symptoms and to follow CDC guidance if symptoms develop. If a person does not have symptoms follow appropriate CDC guidance for home isolation.

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

INSTRUCTIONAL SCHEDULING MODELS

As schools plan to reopen, the instructional schedule model chosen will become the foundation of a student's and family's future experience in their school community. There are many considerations and decision-making points LEAs will need to consider in their planning. First and foremost, LEAs planning for their instructional schedule model need to focus on ensuring student learning and competency development while also considering a student's social–emotional well-being.

We understand there are needed statutory changes to accommodate the instructional schedule model examples identified in this document. These instructional schedule model examples do not contemplate California's current instructional time, attendance for apportionment rules, and audit guidelines.

As schools reopen and considerations are made to meet the health and safety guidelines, the following are some instructional schedule model options and essential planning questions and action steps for LEAs to consider. LEAs should enter into their planning with a flexible approach, understanding that they may start the school year with one instructional schedule model and, as new information becomes available about health and safety, they may transition to a different model. Guidance on standards for quality distance learning is being developed and will be available on the CDE website.

No matter the instructional schedule model, please continue to work to eliminate the barriers to student success that existed before the closure. We have an unprecedented opportunity to improve how we care for and educate each child. Let's work to enhance the public good of our public schools as we implement more student-centered designs. These suggestions are only a few of the options that may be considered, so please work closely with your community to develop the list of essential planning questions that build on your assets and address your local needs.

Instructional Scheduling Model Options

Example A: Two-Day Rotation Blended Learning Model

Students report to school on two designated days based on grade level for in-person instruction (example: Monday/Wednesday for grade levels K–3, Tuesday/Thursday for grade levels 4–6). On the other days, students are engaged in enrichment opportunities aligned with academic goals established by the school through various programs, either on site or with community partners, that are coordinated by school instructional staff. This could mean small group instruction for certain student groups, such as English learners receiving designated English language development. Physical education, health, and other content area teachers, as well as administrators and teachers on special assignment, could be included to reduce

student–teacher ratios. On Fridays, all students would be engaged in distance learning opportunities and teachers in collaborative planning and/or professional learning opportunities. An important consideration is maximizing pre-existing student–teacher relationships. This could include students returning to teachers they had before the closure, creating advisory groups that build on positive relationships, or instituting looping to ensure students know who they will be working with for the next two or more years.

Example B: A/B Week Blended Learning Model

Half of the student population attends in-person learning opportunities four full days per week while the other half is engaged in distance learning opportunities. The students would alternate each week. All grade bands would be included. The instructional program would be sequenced to accommodate both asynchronous and synchronous learning opportunities for students. One day a week, all students would be engaged in distance learning while teachers would use the time for collaborative planning and professional learning. LEAs may also decide to have certain grade levels attend only in-person instruction while other grade levels engage in only distance learning instruction.

Example C: Looping Structure

For schools serving grade levels TK–8, there is an opportunity for students to stay with the same teacher in cohorts for multiple grade levels. Looping provides opportunities for improved relationships between students and teachers, more targeted and efficient instruction, and a higher attendance rate. For example, a teacher and student cohort would stay together for first and second grade, increasing the opportunity for literacy rates on or above grade level. Teachers and students staying together over multiple grade levels can build a better understanding of health and safety, decreasing risks to students and staff.

Example D: Early/Late Staggered Schedules

Grade level bands would have staggered start and dismissal times, such as AM/PM rotations (for example, TK–2, 3–5, 6–8, 9–10,11–12). The bell schedule would accommodate multiple recesses and lunch periods and multiple meal distribution points, along with time for students to engage in handwashing before entering classrooms. Students could be in a homeroom with teachers rotating to decrease student congregation in hallways.

Essential Planning Questions/Action Steps for LEAs

- How will the LEA engage with their education partners and staff in collaboratively making the decision of choosing an instructional schedule model?
- How will the LEA create a process for evaluating and adapting models throughout the year with all educational partners and staff?
- As an LEA is contemplating different instructional schedule models, a review of the LEA's infrastructure and resources should be considered in the decision-making process. For example:
  - What technology access and resources are available for students and families?
  - What technology support resources are available for students and families?

- What technology policies are in place to protect private and sensitive student information? Are policies current and compliant with California data privacy laws?
- How does a survey of physical buildings and space inform the instructional schedule model decision?
- How will the LEA survey needs of staff and provide aligned professional learning?
- How will all students' needs be addressed within the instructional schedule model?
- What instructional and social–emotional supports will students and families need?
- How will you measure success and effectiveness of the model?
- What model are other schools in the area choosing to help with consistent and coherent approaches to support families?

- Conduct a survey or review on current teacher/staff, student, and family needs. Review data and determine LEA strengths, barriers, and capacity to support identified needs.
- What is the communication plan for reopening with a new instructional schedule model?
  - LEAs should consider communication for different audiences and critical messages, including
    - how messages will be delivered and
    - how to improve the efficacy of communication by identifying and addressing potential language barriers, cultural barriers, and disability accommodations or supports necessary for communicating to families and other audiences.

INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING

As LEAs choose the instructional schedule model that best fits the needs of their students and families, considerations for intentional planning of instruction will be key to a successful implementation. Instructional planning should include time for general and special education staff to collaboratively plan and learn from each other. To support this collaboration, a system to learn in real time how the learning environment is or is not working for students is essential. Ideally, this feedback loop would allow for school leaders to see how well students are engaged in their learning, whether the instructional supports and accommodations are working, and whether the material is relevant and accessible to the student.

Essential Questions for Consideration

- What planning time and infrastructure will teachers and staff need to discuss real-time feedback from students?
- What planning resources will staff need to work together to design and lead changes in their classrooms?
- What data will be collected as a feedback loop on students' experiences to inform planning?
- How will the LEA ensure students with disabilities and other special populations are fully integrated into every aspect of preparation and participation of the instructional model?
- How will Universal Design for Learning (UDL) be utilized during instructional planning time?
- How will the teacher teams determine essential state standards to focus learning?
- How will staff engage with the student to figure out learning barriers and plan to find innovative ways to meet their needs?

- What academic and social–emotional supports or interventions are provided to those students who are struggling with the instructional program model?
- How will the LEA ensure not only the needs of all students are addressed, but that the decision made will benefit all students, staff, and families?

COLLABORATION AND ASSESSMENT

In order to inform instruction and gauge student learning, it is important to consider and solidify a systematic cycle of assessments including initial screenings and formative and summative assessments. For data to lead to meaningful change in student outcomes, teachers and administrators need designated collaboration time to analyze data, identify shifts and changes in instruction to meet student needs, implement intervention strategies, and assess the effectiveness of instructional strategies. This section assists district leadership and school boards as they make reopening determinations related to using assessments to inform instruction for all students, including those with unique learning needs such as students with disabilities, English language learners, students placed in foster care, and students experiencing homelessness.

Because parents may have children enrolled in multiple schools across districts, it is vital that communication protocols, online learning platforms, and expectations are coherent and consistent. This also engages parents as partners in learning.

Curriculum Frameworks

California's curriculum frameworks are guidance documents for implementing the content standards adopted by the State Board of Education. The standards themselves are a resource to inform teachers, administrators, and parents of the skills and knowledge that students should master and learn at each grade or proficiency level. All curriculum frameworks include information on how to ensure access and equity for all students. Much of this guidance includes how to utilize the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) practices in instructional planning and delivery.

Initial Screening/Diagnostic Assessments

Purpose: Diagnostic assessments are used to identify specific areas where instruction or intervention may be needed to improve student learning.

Due to interrupted instruction caused by COVID-19, local educational agencies (LEAs) should consider scheduling universal screenings at a variety of intervals. For example, diagnostic assessments can be administered at the beginning of the school year (or in summer if appropriate or feasible).

Formative Assessments/Progress Monitoring

Purpose: Formative assessments and progress monitoring take place during the lesson and provide actionable information about students' learning status relative to the desired lesson goal. Teachers can use data from formative assessments immediately to adjust their instruction and ensure students progress towards learning goals.

Essential Questions

- Are there common diagnostic, formative, and summative assessment tools across the district/site for comparative analysis to identify specific targeted student learning needs?
- If assessments must be given at home, how have students been prepared for and given opportunity to practice the protocols for administration? If parent support or guidance is needed, how have they been prepared?
- Is there a clearly defined multitiered system of support that includes guidance for implementing Tier 1 strategies before offering Tier 2 interventions? When and how to offer Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports?
- Do staff have structured collaboration time to engage in improvement cycles including reviewing student assessments, planning instructional shifts and strategies based on data, establishing clear outcome goals, debriefing the lesson as a team, and repeating the process? What might this look like in a virtual setting?
- How will districts ensure appropriate accommodations are made for students?

Considerations

- Consider a data management platform to collect, house, and disaggregate local data on a regular basis.
- Consider developing a regularly scheduled time for grade-level teams and staff meetings to engage in cycles of inquiry around student data. Rural districts might use this opportunity to connect grade-level teams virtually for collaboration.
- Establish a common protocol for regular and consistent communication to parents.
- Develop a plan to meet the social–emotional needs of the student prior to administering an assessment. Examples include greetings and a warm-up game (with physical distancing) to ease anxiety, prior to asking students to demonstrate learning. If diagnostic testing has not been widely implemented in previous years, staff administering the assessments should be sure to clarify the purpose of diagnostic assessments.
- Interventions may include a regularly scheduled 30-minute session with an intervention provider or specialist through video conference, scaffolding for specific task assignments (e.g., an outline or sentence starters for written responses), pre-highlighted texts, more frequent feedback or check-ins, time management supports, or maintaining a daily written agenda. Students in upper grade levels may be offered guidance for monitoring their own progress and implementing interventions independently, if appropriate. For example, students can implement supports like setting their own timer to chunk assignments, keeping a daily agenda that outlines tasks and goals, or creating a playlist or active routine to help with stress or anxiety management.
- Formative assessment examples may include collecting exit tickets through a digital platform at the end of each class session, whether online or in person; using an opener to reinforce skills and check for understanding on concepts recently taught; giving students opportunities to share what is working and what is not working; or continuing to provide ample opportunity for discussion and meaningful content interaction with students through high-order thinking questions. As students are given opportunities to participate in engaging activities, be sure to provide students with ample time to think and develop a solid response, as appropriate.
- When reviewing all assessment data, focus on a continuous improvement learning model.

- Provide professional learning for teachers on diagnostic assessments.
- Existing learning management systems can also provide opportunities to assign students quiz-style assessments that they can complete synchronously (in real time through distance learning) or asynchronously (learning same material at different times/locations). Students can be permitted to complete the assessment multiple times to allow for reteaching.
- Learning goals should be clearly established and explicitly communicated to students. Providing students with an essential question or learning goal at the beginning of instruction, and frequently referring back to the question or goal, provides transparency for students. In a virtual environment, this can include prominently posting the learning goal or essential question on a teacher's web page, asking students to keep a learning log to track their key learnings throughout a lesson or unit, or weekly check-ins that require students to respond to the essential question using information from the week's lessons and activities.
- Consider using choice boards, which provide students with a variety of options that demonstrate learning and allow students to revise or resubmit work after reteaching or receiving feedback. Feedback should be timely, specific, and actionable, either through written or oral communication, videos or sound recordings, or student-to-student feedback in online breakout sessions.
- Consider working with students to develop a portfolio (online or paper), selecting their work products to put in an online file, and submitting reflection videos.

Resources

See Appendix B for Instructional Programs resources.

SOCIAL–EMOTIONAL LEARNING

There is a growing body of research proving that social and emotional learning (SEL) is fundamental to academic success. SEL must be woven into the work of every teacher, in every classroom and every after-school and summer learning program if we truly want to prepare all our students for college and careers. We know the COVID-19 pandemic has created different types of traumatic experiences and high levels of stress for many of our staff, students, and families. This experience emphasizes the importance of social–emotional well-being for all. LEAs will need to have the emotional recovery of students, staff, and families at the forefront of their planning and decision making.

When educators and students practice physical distancing at school or through distance learning, it does not mean they must lose social and school connections. During the COVID-19 response, it is critically important to place adult and student wellness first to establish a positive, safe, and supportive learning environment. Leading with SEL is essential because children need social and emotional support as they, like the adults around them, navigate the unprecedented challenges of alternative learning contexts, and because SEL helps students access academic content through building essential self-management skills, resilience, and connections.

As students return to campus in classrooms adapted to ensure physical distancing, consider how your local education agency might adapt instruction to account for the following:

- Before school starts, how will the LEA engage with families and provide activities to help families feel comfortable on the school campus?
- Before school starts, how will the LEA engage with staff to help them feel comfortable when returning to their classrooms and schools?
- How will the LEA support staff to integrate SEL practices? What types of professional development will be offered and how often will it be available?
- How will school staff provide non-academic-focused check-ins with students?
- How might wearing masks alter our understandings of how individuals are feeling? Consider lessons on alternative ways to communicate feelings.
- How can we positively communicate the need for physical distancing in the classroom? Children naturally hug, touch, etc. when playing. Consider finding ways to positively reinforce good practices.
- How will we handle students' and/or families' varied understandings of physical distancing measures? Consider age-appropriate lessons on the science behind infection. Such lessons may also be leaned upon when addressing students who express concern when seeing other classmates exhibit signs of allergies or other noncontagious symptoms.
- How will students who need additional support to physically distance or who may not be able to wear a mask due to a manifestation of their disability be supported at the school site? What, if any, exceptions can be made in such circumstances?
- How can we support movement to ensure children are expending adequate energy? As student movement from classroom to classroom or recess activities are restricted, there may not be as many opportunities for physical activity during the school day. Consider building in transition activities that allow for movement.
- How do we integrate SEL practices into instructional planning?

As the possibility of a virus resurgence exists, so does the possibility of alternating between virtual learning and in-person classroom activities. The CDE has compiled a list of resources that provide a range of SEL options for educators, administrators, other school leaders, and families/guardians as they support their students during distance learning. To view the list of resources, visit the CDE SEL and Distance Learning web page at https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/se/seldistance.asp. Many of these resources can be used inside and outside the classroom.

The CDE is committed to helping educators learn more about SEL and how to infuse social and emotional supports into every child's school experience. The CDE convened a group of experts from different sectors of the education system to advise the best ways to support SEL implementation. The team developed California's Social and Emotional Learning Guiding Principles (full version and summary) and a social and emotional learning resource guide. To learn more about this work, visit the CDE SEL web page at https://www.cde.ca.gov/eo/in/socialemotionallearning.asp.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

As LEAs make plans to reopen school sites, they are presented with a unique opportunity—to ensure students with disabilities and other special populations are fully integrated into every aspect of preparation and participation, and to ensure the needs of all students are addressed and the decision benefits all students, staff, and families. As Tucker and Kruse wrote:

> We must prepare in a way that is flexible enough to respond to an uncertain future under COVID-19, yet robust enough to ensure that all students—including students with disabilities—have an equal opportunity to succeed over the long term. Doing so can help ensure that equity is built into the foundation of a new era of education.[1]

Creating A Universally Designed, Inclusive Plan for Reopening That Plans for the Needs of Diverse Learners and Students with Exceptional Needs

Seize the opportunity to develop an integrated plan for reopening that addresses the needs of students with disabilities from the build. While this is not an exhaustive list, the Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) Administrators of California surveyed their membership and provided the following areas to consider as LEAs build their plans to return to school sites.

Areas Identified Specific to Students with Disabilities (SWD)

The following areas have been identified as overarching areas of concern that should be addressed in reopening planning.

Health and Safety

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)/Essential Protective Gear (EPG)

- Consider the differing requirements of PPE/EPG for the differing populations of students with disabilities (i.e., for those requiring medical procedures, toileting, lifting and mobility assistance).
- Consider how the LEA will address students with disabilities who refuse or are not able to wear masks.

Planning for Students who are Medically Fragile and/or Immune Compromised

- Clearly define how staff can honor physical distancing recommendations, yet meet student medical, personal, or support needs.
- Determine how adequate space and facilities will be utilized to maintain health and safety of students and staff, especially when tending to individual student medical or personal needs.
- Build in flexibilities to keep students connected and included in the class and school community regardless of how much physical time they are able to attend school. Ensure the ability to quickly pivot to attending class virtually in order to retain some regular connection to teacher and peers.
- Determine any special or unique needs for students with disabilities related to planned district or schoolwide procedures and protocols related to the following:
  - Daily health screening and temperature checks

1 Eric Tucker and Lindsay Kruse, 2020, "Preparing to Reopen: Six Principles That Put Equity at the Core," *Getting Smart*. https://www.gettingsmart.com/2020/05/preparing-to-reopen-six-principles-that-put-equity-at-the-core/.

- Restroom use as well as diapering and toileting
- Paths of travel
- Use of campuses for recess or recreational activities
- Cleaning and disinfecting

Physical Distancing

- Establish any necessary flexibilities for specific students-with-disabilities populations such as preschool-age, students with extensive support needs, behavioral challenges, etc.
- Establish flexibilities and plan for how to implement physical distancing given lack of space and facility limitations, particularly for children who will struggle with maintaining physical distancing.
- Address potential issues from physical distancing rules that could result in unintended segregation of students on campuses away from peers without disabilities.
- Plan for maintaining access to peers without disabilities and ensure that students remain in the least restrictive environment.
- Determine how the LEA will provide related services in instructional models while staying physically distant.
- Discuss how LEA staff and providers will conduct assessments while practicing physical distancing.

Ensuring a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

- Work with each family and student to determine what FAPE looks like for each student and family during COVID-19. It may be different than the individualized education program (IEP) developed pre-COVID-19.
- Use the LEA model(s) for all students as the basis for establishing FAPE.
- Ensure children with disabilities are included in all offerings of school education models by using the IEP process to customize educational opportunities and provide supports when necessary.
- Use annual IEP to plan for traditional school year and while not required, it is suggested LEAs include distance learning plans or addendums to address distance learning needs during immediate or future school site closures.

Utilizing the IEP and Consideration of Family Needs

Utilize and Update Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)

In the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, the federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) and CDE provided guidance that IEP amendments were not necessarily required for the immediate change to distance learning. However, the duration and overarching changes to education delivery in many cases will warrant changes to students' IEPs. This ensures that the IEPs account for the local delivery of education as school sites reopen, including contingencies for pivoting in and out of distance learning.

In accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), each student with a disability has unique needs and it is the purpose of the education system to ensure every student has access to their grade-level standards and makes progress in their education. The IEP is the roadmap for each student with a disability, and in these challenging and evolving times including COVID-19 restrictions, it is critical that the IEP team meets and works with the family to jointly determine what is working for each student in distance learning as well as what accommodations and modality of learning allows the greatest access.

Communicate Openly and Often with Families

Do not underestimate the need to initiate and have ongoing communication with families. Even for those families who switched apprehensively to distance learning, re-engaging and reaching out often and sometimes through multiple avenues is critical to ensure connectedness and support, particularly for families who may be in crisis.

Collaborative, ongoing discussion about an appropriate path forward once school sites reopen for each student, given each student's unique needs and circumstances, is critical to ensuring equitable access and offering of FAPE for students with disabilities. We know every family situation and feeling about the current pandemic are as unique as the needs of the children. Honoring the fears, challenges, diversities, and preferences of families is critical to the success of students with disabilities in reopening our schools.

ENGLISH LEARNERS

School closures will have an increased impact on learning acceleration for the 1.1 million English learners enrolled in California public schools. When schools reopen—whether it is via distance learning, physical attendance, or a blended model—it is important that LEAs continue to ensure the goal of English learners acquiring fluent English proficiency as rapidly and effectively as possible is attained.

Our English learners, like all our students, have had a disruption of their daily lives, have worries about their own families, and have experienced high stress situations. These students will need additional supports to rebalance and refocus on the task of learning and being productive in the school community. The goal remains for English learners to achieve the same rigorous grade-level academic standards that are expected of all students, within a reasonable period of time. To accomplish these goals, all English learners must receive a comprehensive program of designated and integrated English language development (ELD) instruction targeted to their proficiency level, and appropriate academic instruction in a language acquisition program (5 *CCR*[c][1]).

The California English Learner Roadmap Policy

The Educational Programs and Services for English Learners (EL Roadmap Policy) sets the direction for educating English learners in California. The EL Roadmap Policy provides LEAs with four guiding principles to support and embrace the English learners they serve:

- Principle One: Assets-Oriented and Needs-Responsive Schools
- Principle Two: Intellectual Quality of Instruction and Meaningful Access
- Principle Three: System Conditions That Support Effectiveness
- Principle Four: Alignment and Articulation Within and Across Systems

These principles should continue to guide LEAs in implementing instructional programs for English learners during distance learning and the transition to reopening schools. This includes ensuring that LEAs support English learners' social–emotional well-being. LEAs should ensure that they embrace English learners as the assets they are while also providing them with the support they need to succeed. The same is true for English learner students with disabilities. For dually identified students, a knowledgeable educator should be involved in planning distance learning needs for students with an individualized education program (IEP). The Practitioners' Guide for Educating English Learners with Disabilities is available on the CDE Educating English Learners with Disabilities web page.

If an LEA is providing remote learning for its students, the LEA must provide language instruction services to English learners. LEAs must continue to provide designated and integrated ELD and have the flexibility to determine how services will be provided to English learners. The LEA can determine where, when, and what students receive in order to continue to make progress toward English language proficiency to meet grade-level academic achievement.

Under state and federal law, there is no required amount of time that must be allocated to English language services. LEAs do have a dual obligation to provide English learners a program designed to overcome language barriers, to address any deficits incurred while learning English. These services may be provided virtually, online, or via telephone.

California schools have over 700 language acquisition programs where students are learning in two languages through dual language or bilingual models, and those should continue to be implemented through the use of technology and support from LEAs that are effectively providing the services. While LEAs may not be able to provide services in the way they normally would during this national emergency, LEAs must make every attempt to continue to provide these services.

As we return to schools, it will be critical to leverage the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) concentration funds, supplemental federal Title I, Title III, and federal flexibilities on programs and supports to accelerate learning. Engaging parents and the community in this acceleration can be done with a parent liaison who facilitates family engagement. Using these resources helps ensure equipment, internet connectivity, access to the necessary materials, and professional development for teachers of English learners. Title III funds can support dual enrollment for students to be able to complete the A–G requirements or obtain college credit.

School closures and the reopening process may also impact reclassification. If an LEA was not able to administer the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC) to all students during the 2019–20 school year due to school closures, the LEA should follow the most recent guidance provided

by the CDE: LEAs may not exit an English learner from EL status unless the student has demonstrated proficiency (level 4) on the ELPAC. Schools should closely monitor English learners and students who were reclassified as fluent English proficient to evaluate whether students need additional services. An English learners' English proficiency level may have decreased because the student has experienced limited instruction for an extended time during school closures. Therefore, close monitoring is key to ensure that English learners have the opportunity to recover any academic losses incurred during school closures.

Collaboration is key to supporting English learners during distance learning and throughout the transition to reopening schools. Consider practices such as remote instruction, telephone calls, meetings held on digital platforms, online options for data tracking, and documentation of services, supports, and accommodations provided. In addition, an LEA might consider non-technology-based strategies, such as providing instructional packets or assigning projects and written assignments to English learners.

In addition to collaborating with classroom teachers and school, district, and county educators, engaging the parents of English learners remains important during distance learning and school reopening. LEAs have an obligation to ensure meaningful communication with parents of English learners in a language they can understand and to adequately notify parents of the same information about any program, service, or activity that is shared with parents of students who are not classified as English learners. LEAs should translate all mailings and emails to parents to provide access to the information in a language they understand. For parents who are not literate, LEAs may use recorded telephone calls that go to families that include the option to select a language in which to hear the message. Working with parents and offering them the opportunity to be involved in their children's education is key to the students' success at all times, especially during distance learning and the transition to reopening.

Essential Questions That LEAs Need to Consider

- How will designated and integrated ELD be provided?
- How will we support English learners with oral language development?
- How will we engage English learners' families and ensure they receive information and convey information in a language they understand?
- How will we ensure that the social–emotional and physical health needs of English learners are addressed?
- How will we ensure that English learners have the tools needed to engage in the curriculum, including access to technology as well as access to books or assignment packets?

- How will we track English learners' progress and ensure that all current English learners and reclassified students make progress?
- How will we support English learners who are not making progress toward proficiency?
- How will we provide opportunities for home language development for all English learners and ensure that the home language is seen as an asset?
- How will we address the needs of multilingual students and English learners enrolled in multilingual programs?
- How will we ensure that English learners have access to the full curriculum, including ELD?
- How will we provide professional learning opportunities and tools to teachers and paraprofessionals focused on meeting the needs of English learners during distance learning and the transition to reopening schools?

CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION

As California begins the process of reopening its schools, special consideration must be given to those that offer programs in career and technical education (CTE). CTE programs and the local educational agencies (LEAs) that offer them need to consider the conduct of instruction, how career counseling should be offered, and the measures required to ensure safety without losing quality work-based learning (WBL) opportunities. For a safe reopening, CTE programs should review the health and safety guidance and checklist as well as guidance for other work sectors that the student may be working in. https://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/coronavirus/Health-Care-General-Industry.html

As schools plan to reopen, reviewing the following 12 essential elements described by the California Workforce Pathways Joint Advisory Committee (CWPJAC) will help create a quality CTE program. These 12 elements are supported by the CWPJAC Guiding Principles. The Guiding Principles and the 12 essential elements are located at https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/ct/gi/guidingpps.asp.

CTE programs are part of the comprehensive educational system and must be held to the same general guidelines set by the LEA. However, due to the nature of CTE programs and the hands-on approach that is needed, additional elements must be considered as schools plan for a safe reopening. Please refer to the CDE Career Technical Education page as a starting point for how current CTE students are being served, at https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/ct/. There are also resources for CTE distance learning at https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/ct/dl/.

CTE Instruction

CTE classrooms often engage students in learning activities that stretch the imagination and require critical thinking as well as experimentation. As such, students need to be prepared to enter the classroom or learning space feeling safe and comfortable. When schools are planning for reopening, they should consider what types of instructional models would best match the CTE program goals and ensure students and staff are engaging in a safe manner according to the health and safety guidelines.

LEAs should consider the following as they move to reopen their CTE classrooms.

- Develop a system to clean all equipment or tools being used using the health and safety guidance as the foundation for their planning. Tools are checked out often during an instructional period and returned at the end of that class. A process should be developed to ensure that all tools are cleaned each time they are returned so that they are ready for the next student or next class.

- In an instructional laboratory such as a shop, equipment is used numerous times during a class period and may need to be sanitized according to the health and safety guidance. Extra time should be spent at the beginning of the year to review typical safety precautions with additional time reviewing special circumstances centered on cleanliness to avoid exposure to COVID-19.
- A process should be developed to ensure all equipment is clean and safe every time a class occurs. Many CTE courses assign tasks to students who assist in cleanup at the end of class, and the students should be trained in all safety processes and procedures. It would be appropriate to assign a student each period to ensure that equipment is properly cleaned following each use.
- To reduce the number of students in a CTE laboratory and maintain physical distancing, consider having half of the students remain in the classroom while the other half participates in the laboratory instruction.

A high-quality CTE program includes instruction and also engages students in career counseling, leadership, and experiential learning. To reopen schools, all three components need to be addressed along with high-quality CTE instruction.

Career Counseling

Career counseling is an important component for a student when they decide which high-quality CTE program to choose. When schools reopen, they should consider the following with regard to career counseling.

- Since counselors and teachers will likely be able to see students on site but with less face time, they may need to rely on blended instruction with some in-person direction and some via a remote platform. Direction could also be delivered by recorded instruction posted on a class web page.
- Educators should rely on online tools such as the California CareerZone, found at https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/ct/cc/. California Career Center, and mobile apps such as the Career Surfer, My Stuff Job Central, and My Stuff CAP (career action plan) which students can use on their own and at their own speed to complete assignments.
- Educators will need lesson plans and activities developed for distance learning that can be given to students with less upfront direction due to the limited time of in-person instruction.

Experiential Learning

An important component of a quality CTE program is experiential learning. This is where a student is able to gain additional skills through job shadowing, internships, and entrepreneurial experiences. To ensure that students remain safe and healthy while completing this instructional strategy, LEAs should consider the following.

- Work with business and industry partners to develop a plan to maintain distancing requirements while students are on site.
- Look into alternatives to on-site placement. Are there opportunities for virtual industry opportunities?
- Work with teachers on potential methods to supervise and monitor students who are taking part in experiential learning opportunities. Teachers should consider skills being obtained by the student and also notice safety and cleanliness policies.

For long-term preparation, LEAs must explore different modes of delivering work-based learning (WBL), problem- and project-based learning, and how a blended approach of virtual and in-person instruction can create more experiential learning opportunities for students.

Career and Technical Student Organizations

Leadership development though participation in a Career Technical Student Organization (CTSO) provides skills that are necessary to be successful in any career. Critical thinking, consensus building, teamwork, and job readiness skills are a few of the many standards addressed through participation in a CTSO. As a graded component in a CTE course, it is important that the LEAs review the expectations and how they can be accomplished in a safe and healthy way.

Engage students in a process to review their calendar of events in an effort to provide creative alternatives to participation. Some considerations might include:

- Holding monthly meetings in a way that enhances the distancing requirements
- Developing engaging activities that can be completed virtually
- Working with community groups to plan for safely participating in service projects
- Reviewing the LEA's current travel policy and adopting revised strategies to ensure safe and healthy travels, as many CTSO activities are out-of-class and often out-of-town
- Reviewing the current travel restrictions for students and faculty, addressing travel within the community, county, state, and even nationally
- Addressing the need of the travel versus the risks
    - For example, if a group of seven students is traveling within a 30-mile radius to participate in a competition, what would the restrictions be? If the students were traveling the same distance to take part in a meeting, would the same restriction apply? What if the students were participating in a leadership conference with students from other communities?

For many students, their CTE class is what keeps them in school and engaged in learning. Significantly, it is the hands-on learning that takes place within a high-quality CTE program, and it is the social gathering that builds relationships. LEAs are encouraged to provide safe and healthy opportunities for students to develop alternatives that keep the students engaged in the hands-on learning process as well as having the opportunities to be social.

To ensure that learning is occurring, be creative; engage industry partners, teachers, and students; and listen actively. These are big steps that help CDE properly prepare young people to enter the career of their choice and/or elect to continue their education beyond high school.

EXPANDED LEARNING

As school districts consider their options for reopening and redesigning the school day, they should be reaching out proactively to their expanded learning partners. Publicly funded after-school and summer programs operate at more than 4,500 school sites around the state, serving over 860,000 students—more than 80 percent of whom are socioeconomically disadvantaged (California Department of Education 2018).[2] Expanded learning partners have a unique set of assets and expertise that are particularly important in the COVID-19 era. In particular, after-school and summer programs have an explicit commitment (defined in *Quality Standards for Expanded Learning in California: Creating and Implementing a Shared Vision of Quality*) to build the positive relationships, safe and supportive environments, and engaging activities that students most need in this time of uncertainty and stress.[3]

Different Types of Expanded Learning Programs

After-school and summer programs are often run by nonprofit, community-based organizations, sometimes under contracts with school districts for public funding like the state After School Education and Safety (ASES) Program or the federal 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) and After School Safety and Enrichment for Teens (ASSETs). Sometimes these programs operate with private grants and/or charge parent fees. They may run programs on school sites or in the community.

Why: The Science Grounding

Stress has a major impact on the developing brain. The Science of Learning and Development Alliance is a great resource for teachers, administrators, and LEAs to understand how stress affects students (see its research at https://www.soldalliance.org/resources). In the pandemic, students may have experienced high levels of stress from the disruption of their daily lives, worries about their own and family members' health, and possibly financial strains in the household and community. For children living in unstable or unsafe conditions, the stress and trauma—resulting in ongoing, unbuffered cortisol—threaten to have long-term negative impacts on their bodies and brains. These students will likely return to school needing additional supports to rebalance their limbic systems and refocus on the task of learning and being productive in a school community.

This is where expanded learning can play a key role. Oxytocin—released through the experience of trusting relationships and safe, calm, predictable environments—acts as a buffer to cortisol, allowing children to access the higher order thinking, planning, remembering, and regulating functions of their limbic system.[4] Expanded learning programs are an untapped resource that not only complement academic skill-building, but more importantly, specialize in building positive relationships with young people and their families.

2 California Department of Education, 2018, *Characteristics of Schools and Students Participating in After School Programs 2017 Report*. https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/ex/documents/lrafterschoolprograms17.pdf.

3 California Department of Education, 2014, *Quality Standards for Expanded Learning in California: Creating and Implementing a Shared Vision of Quality*. https://www.afterschoolnetwork.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/quality_standards.pdf?1490047028.

4 Turnaround for Children, n.d., "The Science." https://www.turnaroundusa.org/what-we-do/the-science/.

Staff in these programs often have had similar experiences of the student population and can quickly form authentic relationships with students. And, because family members sign their children out with staff at the end of the after-school program, expanded learning staff are more likely to have relationships with families, often acting as a bridge to school-day teachers through the ongoing communication that naturally takes place. In fact, during distance learning, some districts have relied on their expanded learning partners to find and re-engage families that they could not reach remotely. Expanded learning programs also focus on creating safe, supportive learning environments that foster a sense of belonging for all students, reinforce high expectations for behavior, and inspire engagement, skill development, and mastery—all of which are enhanced and deepened through the trust built between students and expanded learning staff. In this time of dysregulation and readjustment, expanded learning providers are key allies in reaching students and rebalancing their equilibrium for learning.

How: Innovation, Time, and People

There are multiple models being considered for a redesigned school structure to comply with health standards and physical distancing requirements. After-school programs can help in each model. Across all of the following configurations, expanded learning providers can ensure that students are having positive social interactions with adults and peers in safe and supportive environments that value youth engagement and learning.

Staggered Times

Some districts may have A and B groups that attend on alternating days or in AM and PM rotations. In either case, expanded learning staff could be

- working with the group that is not currently in class,
- doing innovative and engaging activities that build on the lessons taught in class,
- supporting students in completing projects assigned in class, or
- doing computer science activities, theatre, visual arts, or science to enrich students' learning experiences.

Different Grade Levels

Similarly, if districts choose to have in-school programming for younger students and continue distance learning for older students, after-school providers could schedule in-person activities for the older students so that they have opportunities to be with peers, practice social and emotional skills, get support with their school work, and have enriching activities to keep them engaged and active.

Episodic Distance Learning

Should the pandemic re-emerge and require periodic distance learning, after-school providers can partner in ensuring that all students have remote access to learning and school meals, and are also maintaining connections with adults from their school communities.

All In-Person Instruction

After-school providers will still be essential partners in helping students readjust to the school environment and re-engage with learning.

What: Eager Partners

What are your next steps?

- Find out who is offering after-school and summer programs at or near your schools.
- Invite them to talk about their approach and their programs.
- Engage them in the planning process as early as possible to align with instructional programs to accelerate learning. They often know much about the local community and its resources and opportunities. When asked, they are good at coming up with innovative solutions and flexible models for supporting the students.
- Be clear about your parameters and expectations, and then continue to engage as equal partners. Like you, expanded learning providers are professionals and experts in their field.
- Do any existing memoranda of understandings (MOUs) require updates on modifications to ensure students and staff are safe?

PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS AND LEARNING

Reopening schools utilizing new instructional models requires special attention to professional relationships and learning. Any large-scale transition for schools can only be achieved with commitment through strong educator supports. Educators must be supported in ways that allow them to focus on student learning. An important part of this support should include building and nurturing staff relationships. This can be achieved by addressing the strain of isolation through video conferencing, digital environments, and time for educators to stay in touch with each other, and by ensuring teachers have agency in determining the focus of professional learning (PL). PL sessions should also be facilitated with adult social–emotional learning in mind, incorporating practices such as welcoming rituals, engagement activities, and optimistic closures.

Implementation of a quality PL system aligned to California's Quality Professional Learning Standards ensures that the transition to a new instructional program model will result in positive outcomes for students and educators. Schools should conduct surveys of educators and families regarding early efforts to transition to distance learning to analyze what worked well and what needs improvement before transitioning to a new instructional program model. Data should be continuously collected throughout the transition to inform PL and should be disaggregated by student groups in order to identify the most critical student needs. The content of PL experiences should help administrators and teachers build a shared understanding of what successful implementation of the instructional program model looks like for all students and what the system needs in order to achieve it. PL should also cover health and safety protocols. Community of practice models should continue, through effective use of digital tools, to try new approaches and share results with colleagues, facilitate common planning and peer observation, and provide tailored supports as needed. Instructional leaders should support teachers in building confidence within the new model by providing opportunities to learn and experiment with tools and resources.

ESSENTIAL PLANNING QUESTIONS

- How will the school maintain positive relationships among staff?
- What information can we solicit from students, families, and educators about distance learning efforts and a transition to a new instructional program model that can inform PL opportunities?
- What does successful implementation of the new instructional program model look like and what supports do educators need in order to achieve it?
- What PL structures can continue under the new instructional schedule model and what adjustments need to be made in order to maintain quality and safety and accelerate student learning?
- What opportunities will be provided to teachers in order to build their confidence with the new instructional program model?

MODELS AND BEST PRACTICES

CDE Quality Professional Learning from a Distance

CDE Distance Learning Guidance

CDE COVID-19 Webinars

Learning Forward: Tips for Leading Professional Learning Online

Education Week (Opinion): What Does Remote Instructional Leadership Look Like During a Pandemic?

Oakland Unified School District's Three Signature Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Practices

Chief Learning Officer: How Can We Build Relationships in Virtual Isolation?

CONTINUITY OF RELATIONSHIPS AND LEARNING PLANS

Through the COVID-19 pandemic the importance of the physical space of schools has been amplified. The physical space of schools is where shared experiences happen, memories are created, connectedness and relationships are built, and meals are shared. When LEAs quickly pivoted to distance learning models, one of the reasons school staff found success was because of the existing relationships and connectedness built during the school year.

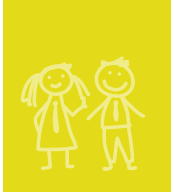
Relationships and connectedness are at the core of our healthiest school communities. We know from experience and the science of learning and development that meaningful relationships are essential for students to grow as learners. The student/staff relationships are the foundation of students' connectedness to the school community and learning. Staff to staff relationships provide the space for staff collaboration and growth. Student to student relationships allow peers to connect to each other and begin to understand diverse perspectives, helping them become more compassionate human beings.

When schools are developing their reopening plans it is important to include a plan to ensure that the learning and the connected relationships developed while the school buildings were open can continue if another school building closure occurs. This is also an opportune time for schools that have previously closed for wildfires, other natural disasters, or public safety power shutdowns (PSPS) to include how learning and relationships will continue if those, or similar, disasters occur again.

Below are essential questions for consideration when developing continuity of relationships and learning plans.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- How will LEAs maintain relationships and connectedness when the physical school buildings are closed?
- How will the LEA continue some of the same practices, such as student announcements, even when the physical school buildings are closed?
- How will the LEA continue to provide opportunities for staff collaboration and professional learning?
- How will LEAs create a feedback loop about the experiences of students, staff, and families to inform their ongoing planning and communication?



- How will LEAs consider the diverse needs of all students and plan for common and differentiated social–emotional and academic supports?
- How will LEAs continue their community partnerships to amplify their efforts of continuity of relationships and learning?
- How are all of our relationships becoming more equitable and strengthening our community?

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF ALL

The entire education community has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The community has experienced high levels of stress from the disruption of daily lives and worries about the physical health of oneself and others, and many have been under financial strains. For many, especially children, living with these strains in the household and community, the stress and trauma threaten to have long-lasting negative impacts on the body and brain. Each person will need additional supports and systems that will help to rebalance and refocus on the task of learning and being productive in a school community.

When considering the reopening of schools, LEAs should contemplate not only the physical health of their constituents but also their mental health and wellness and make it a priority within their planning. LEAs should examine the availability and accessibility of mental health resources and supports for their students, families, and staff members as they return to school, continue distance learning, or participate in a blended model. LEAs should ensure that strong partnerships with mental health supports are created and a system is in place to allow for student and staff support referrals without wait time. This checklist is intended to help local LEAs in their planning for the reopening of schools.

TIER 1: UNIVERSAL SUPPORTS: WHOLE SCHOOL SAFETY AND PREVENTION PLANNING

- What is the LEA doing to promote wellness of students on a daily basis?
  - Conduct universal screening to identify social–emotional needs of students.
  - Share student mental health need assessment data with stakeholders during LCAP stakeholder engagement process.
  - Encourage school boards to adopt policies that support staff and student wellness.
  - Consider strategies to become a trauma-responsive school system to support the school community.
  - Conduct routine check-ins using a trauma- and resilience-informed lens.
  - Develop a system to connect with students and families to promote attendance.

  - Engage with students and families using culturally responsive techniques.
- Are staff trained in providing supports through a trauma-informed and responsive lens?
  - Use Psychological First Aid to assess immediate needs and provide support.
  - Use professional development time to increase trauma knowledge and skills.
- What is the LEA doing to reduce the stigma associated with accessing services?
  - Engage staff in professional development about mental health destigmatization.
- Has the LEA adopted a suicide prevention policy?
  - Share the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-8255 widely. (Include it on staff and secondary student ID cards.)
  - Include mental health and wellness resources on district and school websites and in communications with families (newsletters, emails, texts, robocalls, etc.).
- Has the LEA engaged the school community and mental health practitioners in a survey to understand its constituents' needs in order to build upon existing assets and determine the current mental health needs of staff, students, and families? (For example, the CDE offers a free CalSCHLS Learning from Home Survey.)
  - Conduct schoolwide mental health assessment that includes trauma and stress.
  - Assess and review necessary staffing ratios to meet student needs (teachers, support services, etc.).

TIER 1: COMMUNITY AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

- How are LEAs engaging community-based and local government partners in supporting the mental wellness of staff and students?
  - Collaborate with stakeholders, such as county behavioral health departments and local HMOs and PPOs, to promote staff wellness and provide workshops and supports regarding adult and student mental health, trauma responsiveness, suicide prevention, and resilience.
  - Suggest all LEAs (county offices of education, districts, and school sites) include information and links to increase access to mental health and wellness resources.
  - Share resources for basic needs: food banks, Medi-Cal, Covered California, energy programs, Section 8 housing, prescription and patient assistance programs, unemployment supports, local job postings, local CalFresh and food distribution, free internet access, etc.
  - Provide a link to CDE's Resources for Students in Crisis: https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/cg/mh/studentcrisishelp.asp.

TIER 1: UNIVERSAL SUPPORTS: STAFF WELLNESS

- What supports are available to promote staff wellness and prevent burnout, compassion fatigue, and secondary traumatic stress?
  - Provide trainings on secondary traumatic stress and self-care (e.g., Support for Teachers Affected by Trauma [STAT]).
  - Promote mindfulness techniques and staff social supports.

- Provide routine communication (in-person or virtual) to staff members to encourage self-care, including examples, and examples of wellness (e.g., saying no, accepting oneself and others, and not being at 100% all the time).
- Promote the use of staff support groups to enhance staff cohesion and coping.
- Provide a monthly informational insert in staff checks about mental wellness and local resources.

TIER 1: CLASSROOM STRATEGIES

- How do LEAs promote safety and consistency in the classroom?
  - Establish and implement daily routines for both in-person and remote delivery.
  - Include stress management or mindfulness practices in daily classroom routine.
  - Consider impact of stress and trauma when assessing and supporting students.
  - Use restorative circles (in-person and virtually).

TIER 2/3: EARLY AND TARGETED INTERVENTION FOR STUDENTS AND STAFF

- What supports are currently in place to assist students and staff with mental health issues?
  - Provide staff with resources from their Employee Assistance Program (EAP).
  - Align district funding, policies, and programs to fully support mental wellness for students and staff.
  - Implement or scale up Social Emotional Learning (SEL) to promote social–emotional competencies among students. Promote and support adult SEL.
  - Maintain or expand student mental health services using LCFF, ESSA Title II and IV funds, or other leveraged resources.
- What technology is being used to deliver mental health services remotely? Is this technology platform HIPAA or FERPA compliant? Is it secure?
  - Review district policy and coordinate with mental health partners to ensure confidentiality.
  - Assess what supports are currently in place to assist students with mental health issues.
  - Encourage students to use counseling services as needed. Promote messaging to remove stigma.
  - See that staff are trained in evidence-based practices (CBITS, SSET, DBT for Schools, etc.).
  - Provide information about and access to tele-behavioral health services for counseling services (group, individual).

COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

COMMUNICATION

The COVID-19 pandemic has created intense stress and trauma for the stakeholders schools serve. Any carefully crafted reopening plan will be only as successful as an LEA's ability to maintain trust and credibility through frequent and transparent, two-way communication.

Research on risk communication shows that people are less able to comprehend information when under stress and trust is determined when organizations demonstrate empathy and honesty during a crisis. CDE recommends that schools develop comprehensive communication plans targeting key audiences—such as students, parents and caregivers, employees, and community members—that are responsive to stakeholder concerns. Implementing clear, consistent, and specific communication protocols will allow everyone to safely reengage in this next transition for schools.

Effective communication plans will:

- Understand and utilize the communication methods preferred by target audiences.
- Determine the desired outcomes of communication efforts and design key messages to achieve them.
- Differentiate key messaging across multiple platforms (e.g., email, text messaging, push alerts, infographics, website posts, social media, news media outlets, printed mailings, etc.).
- Include languages other than English.
- Use communication methods that will accommodate persons with hearing and visual impairments.
- Develop frequent messaging that includes all critical information to reduce confusion, anxiety, or misunderstandings. Certainty reduces stress, even when there are not always specifics to share. For example, if plan or action step specifics are not yet available, provide detailed updates and information about the decision-making process and factors being considered (especially as they pertain to stakeholder feedback).

- Ensure communication is bias free and destigmatizing and does not perpetuate stereotypes.
- Use existing school resources to amplify messaging: school campus signage, marquees, existing handouts, etc.
- Provide contact information for follow-up questions or concerns.
- Develop a dedicated hotline and web page that includes answers to common questions and that all staff can direct the public to for the latest updates. This measure can reduce the burden on individual employees and will promote message clarity and consistency across schools.
- Encourage consistency of messaging by developing internal talking points for frontline staff, including principals, teachers, office and clerical staff, etc.

Communication strategies leading up to school reopening should emphasize the safety measures undertaken by the school, including personal protective equipment (PPE) for students, teachers, and staff, cleaning and sanitization protocols, physical distancing measures, and mental health and well-being supports. LEAs should also inform parents about the importance of symptom onset and keeping students home when sick. Communication efforts should also outline processes for parent and guardian visits, pick-up, and drop-off.

LEAs should consider partnering with community organizations, local government, health officials, and higher education partners, leveraging trusted third-party messengers to reach a broader audience.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

As schools begin to plan for reopening, they must actively and authentically engage parents and caregivers, families, and students in the decision-making process in order to build trust and credibility for any plans that are implemented. Effective community engagement will:

- Clearly communicate the organization's objectives.
- Ensure stakeholders understand the ask and their role in the process.
- Specify how and when feedback will be used in the decision-making process.
- Reflect back to stakeholders the feedback received to demonstrate the organization has listened.
- Close the loop and strengthen credibility by communicating how feedback was acted upon.

Examples of effective community engagement strategies include:

- Qualitative and quantitative surveys.
- Focus groups and listening sessions with target stakeholders.
- Previews of draft plans with representative stakeholders to build early understanding and solicit real-time feedback.
- Appointment of representative stakeholders—administrators, students, educators, parents and caregivers, health officers, etc.—to steering committees and task forces charged with developing plans.

EARLY LEARNING AND CARE

Early learning and care (ELC) programs are critical to the California economy. Many essential workers have children who require supervision and care while they perform their essential functions in the community. These children need a safe, quality environment with rich learning experiences and responsive interactions while their parents work.

Many school districts have ELC programs located on the school site that serve infants and toddlers or preschoolers during the day or operate as before or after school programs. The majority of these programs have contracts to provide care that are overseen by the CDE Early Learning and Care Division (ELCD) while other schools might operate an Early Head Start or Head Start program or use Title 1 funds for early learning.

Local school systems may want to consider reopening ELC programs on their campuses even if other classrooms remain closed in order to ensure families in their communities have adequate care for their children while they are at work. (See the CDC guidance and additional guidance from CDSS as available for more information about making the decision to reopen.)

As LEA ELC programs make decisions about whether and how to reopen in adherence to local and state health directives, they should ensure compliance with all program requirements. To ensure the health and safety of staff and children, programs should utilize resources developed by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and by ELCD outlining new regulations and operating procedures.

LEA ELC program providers will need to be well-resourced with cleaning and medical supplies, paying specific attention to handwashing stations, use of PPE by staff—face coverings at a minimum, and disinfecting procedures for all shared surfaces and materials, including toys and other manipulatives. (See MB 20-06 and PIN 20-06-CCP for additional guidance.) All staff and children should minimally undergo temperature checks at the start of each day and appropriate actions should be taken as health concerns including, but not limited to, a temperature above 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or known exposures to COVID-19 arise.

LEA ELC program providers should also take steps to ensure their ability to maintain reasonable physical distancing prior to reopening, including the following:

- Adhering, to the extent possible, to best practices guidance issued by the CDSS and ELCD regarding group size and ratios while also maintaining contractual requirements, unless waived.
- Instituting procedures to ensure children are grouped in the same configuration, with the same staff throughout the day and restrict mixing between groups. This may require reconfiguring the physical space (e.g., deconstructing centers to ensure access to all types of activities for all children) or moving children between physical spaces throughout the day.
- Closing or repurposing communal spaces such as cafeterias and libraries while implementing physical distancing procedures. Such spaces may offer opportunities for reconfiguring to support smaller groups of children.
- Maximizing outdoor time for children in accordance with schedules to rotate use and allow for cleaning of any shared materials or equipment.
- Utilizing head-to-toe placement of children and creating physical barriers, as needed, to protect children and ensure distancing during naptimes.
- Staggering arrival and pick-up times to limit direct contact with and between parents and caregivers to the greatest extent possible and creating processes such as curb pick-up or different doors for entering and exiting to the greatest extent possible.

For additional guidance on implementing physical distancing with young children, see recommendations from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), recommendations from the University of California San Francisco Child Care Health Center, and guidance in MB 20-06.

ELCD will continue to support contractors who are unable to reopen and supplement providers who do reopen as funding and Executive Orders prevail. (See MB 20-11 and MB 20-06.)

SCHOOL SERVICES

TRANSPORTATION

Background

Many LEAs in California operate a school bus program to transport students to and from school. The California school transportation system is the largest mass transportation operation in the state. The system comprises 24,201 public and privately owned school buses, which transport approximately 1,121,857 students to and from school each day.

As the LEAs plan for reopening and decide on their instructional model, transporting students will need to align with the chosen model. Collaboration between the instructional program staff, school transportation staff, and city bus services will be necessary to ensure students reliant on school and city buses will be at school on time. Given the complexities of aligning transportation and instructional models, collaboration and further statewide dialogue on strategies and different scenarios will need to occur. It is critical to plan for the safe transportation of students to and from school during this pandemic.

Best Practices

In order to practice physical distancing on a school bus, the seating capacity must be reduced. This may necessitate the use of a seating chart to designate which seats are available for use.

Routing is the responsibility of the transportation providers at local levels. Each LEA or private carrier will need to evaluate the need of the students that are provided transportation. Transportation providers should be assessing their routes now to determine what will work for their individual area by surveying families and collaborative planning with stakeholders.

Loading/Unloading Zones and Bus Stops

LEAs and private carriers need to consider whether there is enough space for physical distancing at bus stops and school loading and unloading zones. Once physical space is confirmed, it is important to inform students and parents and guardians of steps they must

take to keep students and staff safe during loading and unloading. If transportation providers take the temperature of children prior to loading and unloading the school bus, the provider may need procedures in place for proper training to meet local policies.

Physical Distancing on School Buses

- Determine maximum capacity of students for each vehicle while meeting 6-foot physical distancing objectives.
- Create a plan for seating based on maximum capacity determined above. Sample options:
  - Option 1: Seat one student to a bench on both sides of the bus, skipping every other row.
  - Option 2: Seat one student to a bench, alternating rows on each side to create a zigzag pattern on the bus.
  - Mark or block seats that must be left vacant.
- Assign a bus aide to ensure distancing and do symptom screenings.
- Ensure 6-foot distancing at bus stops and while loading and unloading.
- Prevent students from walking past each other by taking the following measures:
  - Seat students from the rear of the bus forward.
  - Board afternoon runs based on the order in which students will be dropped off. Students who get off first should board last and sit in the front.
- Require face coverings for students and staff at bus stops and on buses.

Vehicle Cleaning

More information on cleaning practices is available in the CDC Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility Guidelines.

NOTE: Wear disposable gloves to clean and disinfect.

Maintenance Scheduling

Vehicles may have exceeded a 45-day maintenance or inspection date while sitting out of service during the COVID-19 stay-at-home orders.

Vehicles need to meet all maintenance and inspection requirements before being placed back into service in accordance with Title 13 CCR 1232 Periodic Preventive Maintenance Inspection.

Carriers and drivers need to look closely at each Vehicle Inspection Approval Certificate (CHP 292) in accordance with Title 13 CCR 1231 Vehicle Inspection Approval Certificate.

Carriers and drivers need to make sure the vehicle's certificate is still valid and that 13 months from the last inspection have not been exceeded in accordance with Vehicle Code 2807 Lawful Orders and Inspections.

Driver Training and Certification

LEAs and private carriers shall ascertain that all drivers meet licensing requirements before operating vehicles.

STUDENT MEALS

Student Meals

A successful nutrition program is a key component to every educational environment. School meals protect the most vulnerable children against hunger. A child cannot focus on learning when they are feeling hungry. School meals boost learning, and studies show that students perform best academically when well nourished. Therefore, ensuring a child has access to healthy and appealing meals in schools is extremely important.

As school food service operations transition from serving meals during unanticipated school closures to serving meals in a blended learning school environment, school districts will need to consider national, state, and local health and safety guidelines. It is important that school districts engage school food service directors in district discussions regarding plans for reopening schools to ensure that students participating in all learning models have access to healthy meals.

School districts will need to consider the resources and flexibilities necessary to transition food service operations to an on-site or off-site student meal delivery system or operate both at the same time. This includes applying for state or nationwide waivers and updating school policies, standard operating procedures, and trainings to ensure compliance with Child Nutrition Program requirements and procuring equipment, supplies, and menu options necessary for meal service.

Considerations for Changes in Food Service Operations

Health and Hygiene Promotion

- Designate a COVID-19 coordinator.
- Teach and reinforce handwashing and use of a cloth face covering by employees when near other employees or students.
- Have adequate supplies for both employees and students including soap, hand sanitizer, and tissues.
- Post signs on how to stop the spread of COVID-19.

Cleaning and Sanitation

- Update standard operating procedures for sanitation of school kitchens, cafeterias, food warehouses, and central production kitchens.
- Train all employees on health and safety protocols, including correct application of disinfectants and maintaining physical distancing.

- Clean and disinfect surfaces frequently touched by students during meal service, including tables, chairs, carts used in transportation, and point-of-service touch pads. Use timers for cleaning reminders.

Meal Preparation

- Ensure gloves, masks, disposable aprons, and other supplies are readily available.
- Promote fresh healthy menu options that are individually plated meals and preportioned and prewrapped produce.
- Use disposable trays and wrap cold items in plastic and hot food with foil.
- Consider how work stations can be reorganized for proper physical distancing during meal preparation and meal service.
- Adjust employee shifts to minimize number of staff in the kitchen.

Onsite Meal Service

- Assess whether to serve meals in the classroom or cafeteria or to use outdoor seating.
- Encourage physical distancing through increased spacing, small groups, and limited mixing between groups, if feasible. Stagger meal times to allow for cleaning between meal services and to serve students in smaller groups.
- Provide at least 6 feet of physical distancing between groups or tables by increasing table spacing, removing tables, marking tables as closed, or providing a physical barrier between tables.
- Provide physical guides, such as tape on floors or sidewalks and signage on walls to ensure that students remain at least 6 feet apart in lines or while waiting for seating.
- Remove or suspend use of share tables and self-service buffets for food and condiments.
- Consider having staff wear masks and gloves while using point of service (POS) touch pads, replace touch pads with a scanner, or have hand sanitizer available.
- Install physical barriers, such as sneeze guards and partitions, at POS and other areas where maintaining physical distance of 6 feet is difficult.
- Consider increasing access points for providing meal service.
- Ensure cleaning of every table between groups of students or meal service times.

Offsite Meal Service (with approved USDA waivers)

- Offer grab-and-go student meals for consumption at home, including drive-through, delivery, or curbside pick-up options.
- Assess whether there are students who are unable to access school meal distribution sites and identify ways to address these gaps.
- Consider whether it is feasible to continue to use buses to distribute meals to students.

Communication with Students and Families

- Notify parents and the school community about school meal service and options.
- Use a variety of communication methods such as social media, newsletters, and school websites.

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APPENDIX A. CDE HEALTH AND SAFETY CHECKLIST

CDC Decision-Making Tree

Visit https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/Schools-Decision-Tree.pdf for guidance on reopening decisions.

Campus Access

- CDC: What to Do If You Are Sick
- CDC: People Who Are at Higher Risk for Severe Illness

Hygiene and PPE

- CDC: Hygiene Practices
- CDC: Using Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- CDC: Use of Cloth Face Coverings to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19

Cleaning and Disinfecting

- EPA: 6 Steps for Safe and Effective Disinfectant Use
- EPA: List N - Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2

Employee Issues

Information for Staff Training

- Healthy Schools Act
- CDPR: California School & Child Care Integrated Pest Management (IPM)
- CDC: Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Patients with Suspected or Confirmed Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Healthcare Settings

Protect and Support Staff Who Are at Higher Risk for Severe Illness

- CDC: People Who Are at Higher Risk for Severe Illness

Communication with Students, Parents, Employees, Public Health Officials, and the Community

- CDC: Criteria to Discontinue Home Isolation
- CDC: Public Health Recommendations for Community-Related Exposure

APPENDIX B. RESOURCES

Instructional Programs

Collaboration and Assessments

Multi-Tiered System of Support

For more information, please visit the California Department of Education's Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) web page at https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/ri/.

Grade Two Diagnostic Assessments

The Grade Two Diagnostic Assessments web page at https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/da/ provides more information about the optional diagnostic assessments for students in grade level two for English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics that meet the requirements of California *Education Code*, Section 60644.

Grade K–8 Assessments

All instructional materials adopted by the State Board of Education include assessments for measuring what students know and are able to do, and also advise teachers how to use assessment results to guide instruction. Thus, if the district is utilizing SBE-adopted materials, standards-based assessments are provided in the instructional materials.

Tools for Teachers

A preview release of Tools for Teachers, the new Smarter Balanced formative assessment component of its system, is scheduled to be available June 16, 2020, at http://www.smarterbalanced.org/tools-for-teachers/. Tools for Teachers provides subject- and grade-specific resources intended to help educators apply the formative assessment process during daily instruction.

Curriculum Frameworks

All of the curriculum frameworks discuss the use of assessment of learning. Screening assessments identify students who may need additional supports or instruction, diagnostic assessments provide specific information about the difficulties, and progress-monitoring assessments provide feedback on whether planned interventions to address the difficulties are effective. These assessments can operate in short or medium cycles.

To access the various frameworks, please visit the CDE Curriculum Frameworks and Instructional Resources page at https://www.cde.ca.gov/re/di/or/cfird.asp.

Progress Monitoring: Interim Assessments Resources

For resources to support progress monitoring, please see the CDE Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments for ELA and mathematics web page at https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/sbacinterimassess.asp.

- More than 160 interim assessments are scheduled to be available August 20, 2020.
- Although developed for grade levels three through eight and high school, the Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments can be administered to students at any grade level (i.e., K–12).
- Results from these assessments will be electronically available to educators within 20 minutes of administration after a school or district coordinator creates the student groups for teachers to access these results.

For practice or training resources visit the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) web page at http://www.caaspp.org/practice-and-training/ or the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC) Practice and Training Tests web page at https://www.elpac.org/resources/online-practice-and-training-test/.

For additional information or support for distance learning instructional strategies and learning acceleration, please contact the Curriculum Frameworks and Instructional Resources Division at distancelearning@cde.ca.gov.

For additional information or support for assessments, please contact the Assessment Development and Administration Division at caaspp@cde.ca.gov for CAASPP; elpac@cde.ca.gov for ELPAC; and pft@cde.ca.gov for Physical Fitness Test.

Social–Emotional Learning

- CDE SEL and Distance Learning web page
- *California's Social and Emotional Learning Guiding Principles* (full version and summary) and social and emotional learning resource guide
  - To learn more about this work, visit the CDE SEL web page at https://www.cde.ca.gov/eo/in/socialemotionallearning.asp

English Learners

The CDE English Learners web page at https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/ contains state and federal guidance, resources, webinars, program models, and newsletters to assist LEAs with implementing distance learning and the transition to reopening schools. This web page includes:

- Guidance
  - US Department of Education Guidance
  - English Language Advisory Committee (ELAC) and District English Learner Advisory Committee (DELAC) Guidance
  - State Seal of Biliteracy Guidance
  - Distance Learning FAQs
- Resources
  - This section includes resources to support English learners; newcomers; multilingual students; and immigrant, refugee, and migratory students during distance learning and the transition to schools reopening, including supporting their social–emotional needs and physical health.
- Webinars or Models
  - Language Acquisition Programs; Dual Language
  - Distance Learning Designated/Integrated ELD
- English Learner Support Division (ELSD) and Parent Newsletters

The Practitioners' Guide for Educating English Learners with Disabilities is available on the CDE Educating English Learners with Disabilities web page.

Career Technical Education

- The Guiding Principles and the 12 essential elements are located at the Workforce Pathways Guiding Policy Principles page
- CDE Career Technical Education page as a starting point for how current CTE students are being served
- Resources for CTE distance learning
- California CareerZone
- California Career Center
  - California Career Center Mobile Applications page featuring Career Surfer, My Stuff Job Central, and My Stuff CAP (career action plan) which students can use on their own and at their own speed to complete assignments
- Cal/OSHA Industry Guidance

Expanded Learning

- *Quality Standards for Expanded Learning in California: Creating and Implementing a Shared Vision of Quality*
- Science of Learning and Development Alliance resources

Professional Relationships and Learning

- CDE Quality Professional Learning Standards

Models and Best Practices

- CDE Quality Professional Learning from a Distance
- CDE Distance Learning Guidance
- CDE COVID-19 Webinars
- Learning Forward: Tips for Leading Professional Learning Online
- Education Week (Opinion): What Does Remote Instructional Leadership Look Like During a Pandemic?
- Oakland Unified School District's Three Signature Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Practices
- Chief Learning Officer: How Can We Build Relationships in Virtual Isolation?

Mental Health and Well-Being of All

- CalSCHLS Learning from Home Survey
- CDE Resources for Students in Crisis

Early Learning and Care

During the state of emergency, the ELCD released Management Bulletins to guide contractors though the COVID closures. This guidance was developed by ELCD in coordination with CDSS Community Care Licensing Division (CCL), CDE Nutrition Services Division, and the California Head Start State Collaboration Office.

- MB 20-11 COVID-19 Guidance: Emergency Closures
- MB 20-09 COVID-19 Guidance on Program Self Evaluation, Contract Monitoring, and Program Quality Requirements

  - Please see the following associated webpage:
    - Early Learning and Care Resources for Family Engagement and Professional Development
- MB 20-08 COVID-19 Guidance on Procurement and Audits
- MB 20-06 COVID-19 Guidance Regarding Emergency Childcare Services for Essential Workers and At-Risk Populations
  - Please see the following associated forms:
    - COVID-19 Self-Certification Form (PDF)
    - COVID-19 2020 Confidential Application for Emergency Childcare Services (PDF)
    - COVID-19 Temporary Waiver Request (PDF)
- MB 20-05 COVID-19 Guidance on Temporary Waiver of Family Fees
- MB 20-04 COVID-19 Guidance on Apportionment, Attendance, and Reporting Requirements

The links below provide access to guidance documents.

CDSS and CCL

- PIN 20-06-CCP (PDF) Social and Physical Distancing Guidance and Healthy Practices for Child Care Facilities in Response to the Global Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic Written in Collaboration with the California Department Education

US Department of Health and Human Services

HHS Administration for Children and Families Early Childhood Development Caring for Our Children Basics: Health and Safety Foundations for Early Care and Education

School Services

Transportation

Cal/OSHA Guidance for Transportation

Vehicle Cleaning

- CDC: Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility Guidelines

Maintenance Scheduling

Vehicles may have exceeded a 45-day maintenance or inspection date while sitting out of service during the COVID-19 stay-at-home orders.

Vehicles need to meet all maintenance and inspection requirements before being placed back into service in accordance with Title 13 CCR 1232 Periodic Preventive Maintenance Inspection.

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Student Meals

Cal/OSHA Guidance for Restaurants

APPENDIX C. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS): SAFE REOPENING OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS

1. **What will LEAs do if a teacher has an underlying health condition?**

   LEAs should work with the teacher to obtain a medical note and may need to consider providing these teachers with accommodations, such as telework or negotiated change in classification or duties.

2. **What will the plan be for nonteaching staff with underlying health conditions?**

   LEAs may need to provide these employees with the ability to work remotely. There may need to be some reassignment of duties that lends to these staff being able to work remotely, or in some other way that meets their need for accommodations, for example, a parent engagement liaison assisting parents with technical support.

3. **If students have underlying health conditions or parents/family members have underlying health conditions, what accommodations will LEAs make?**

   LEAs will likely need to consider providing these students with the option to distance learn so as to protect students and families with compromised health systems from being in harm's way.

4. **How will LEAs arrange students and staff to accommodate physical distancing conditions?**

   LEAs will likely have to maintain small class sizes and limit the number of students in hallways and common spaces. There may need to be a morning session and afternoon session at each school so as to accommodate all students arranged into small class sizes and to offset space limitations.

5. **How will LEAs work with early-grade students who, because of their age, may struggle with maintaining physical distance or wearing a mask?**

   If students from early grades participate in in-person instruction, LEAs may need to arrange them in small groups and may need to increase the number of staff who work with the students in classrooms to help keep students separated in physical distancing ways.

6. **How will you manage school spaces (hallways, common areas, etc.) to accommodate physical distancing needs?**

   Staff will likely need to remind students in hallways and common spaces to maintain physical distancing. LEAs will need to have signage throughout the campus communicating physical distancing requirements.

7. **How will you handle requests from parents who state a preference for distance learning instead of in-person instruction for their children?**

   There are families that may request distance learning and LEAs should consider providing parents, who request it, with the option to learn through distance learning.

8. **How will LEAs handle physical education considering the need for physical distancing?**

   LEAs may need to consider providing physical education through instruction provided to students in small groups or through distance learning where students complete assignments independently.

9. **How will LEAs manage meals during school hours?**

   LEAs may need to consider serving meals utilizing different spaces on campus for health and safety reasons. For those with staggered start times, this could be accomplished in ways such as providing "grab-and-go" meals as students who attended a morning session ending by lunch time leave campus.

10. **How will LEAs handle physical distancing guidelines during bus transport?**

    LEAs will need to consider how transportation can best support their chosen instructional model. LEAs may need to consider deploying more buses or bringing students to schools in shifts in order to maintain physical distances on buses. Buses will have to be fully sanitized between each run. CDE recommends that students should wear cloth face coverings and maintain 6 feet of physical distance while on buses.

11. **What will LEAs do if students forget to bring a mask or do not have one?**

    LEAs will likely have to maintain a supply of masks at school for students and staff who forget to bring one.

12. **What, if any, temperature-taking procedures will LEAs utilize?**

    LEAs will need to designate staff and create a system for student entry that accommodates temperature checks for all students. This could include a self-screening process for families prior to coming to school. In some instances, they may also need to arrange for staff to take the temperatures of students and staff as they arrive to prevent the further spread of the coronavirus.

13. **How will LEAs address hand sanitizing procedures for students?**

    LEAs may have to establish hand sanitizing stations at all school entrances and on playgrounds so that students and staff can sanitize their hands upon entering and exiting the campus and classrooms.

14. **How will LEAs address campus cleaning and sanitizing?**

    Campuses will have to deploy deep-cleaning schedules at campuses at least daily, frequently disinfecting door handles, handrails, sink handles, restroom surfaces, playground equipment, and shared items. Considerations will need to be made for longer breaks within the instructional day to accommodate handwashing. Occupational safety guidelines should be consulted to determine the interval and the ingredients needed to ensure that desks and surfaces are properly sanitized.

15. **How will LEAs handle after-school program needs?**

    If LEAs offer after-school programs, physical distancing guidelines will have to be followed at all times. School and after-school program staff ratios will need to be adjusted (more staff and smaller student group sizes).

16. **How will LEAs address sports and extracurricular activities?**

    LEAs will need to consult public health experts for when these activities may be safely resumed. LEAs are encouraged to be in touch with their local lead of the California Interscholastic Federations.

17. **How will LEAs ensure consistency of instruction across classes and schools in each district? Given that during distance learning the amount and nature of work varied from class to class, how will LEAs promote consistency in districts where there is a blended form of instruction (i.e., in-person instruction and distance learning)?**

    LEAs will need to engage in a collaborative planning process with teachers to develop a scope and sequence for learning and a continuity of learning plan should future school building closures be necessary.

18. **How will locker rooms be sanitized and managed?**

    These facilities will need to be sanitized daily and possibly after each physical education class or activity.

19. **How will students with special needs be served (for example, students with moderate/severe special needs and students who are assigned with a 1:1 paraprofessional)?**

    LEAs will need to engage in a collaborative Individual Education Plan meeting that provides accommodations for the instructional program model that best meets the needs of the student. This could include how a student would access the support of a 1:1 paraprofessional in a blended learning model or a distance learning model.

APPENDIX D. DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH GUIDANCE

CDPH Guidance Documents: Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

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American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)

Association of California School Administrators (ACSA)

California Association of School Business Officials (CASBO)

California Charter Schools Association (CCSA)

California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE)

California County Superintendents Educational Services Association (CCSESA)

California Department of Public Health (DPH)

California Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA)

California Federation of Teachers (CFT)

California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (CalOES)

California Labor Federation (CLF)

California Parent Teachers Association

California School Boards Association (CSBA)

California School Employees Association (CSEA)

California Special Education Local Plan Areas (SELPA)

California Teachers Association

Service Employees International Union (SEIU) 1000

Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 99

Service Employees International Union (SEIU) State Council

Small School Districts Association (SSDA)

SSPI Superintendents Advisory Council

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