Initial Ideas and Resources on Planning for Reopening Following COVID-19 School Closures

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NIEER has developed a 50 state database of State Education Agency (SEA) and Office of Early Learning (or agency that administers Pre-K) COVID policy and resources. We are continually reviewing these websites to identify resources that may be of interest to others. To get information to the field quickly, we will produce a series of short working documents on an on-going basis on key topics. If you would like access to the 50 state database or have resources to share, please contact Lori Connors-Tadros at ltadros@nieer.org.

National Resources

Survey of How Students Will Catch Up. The Collaborative for Student Success is conducting a survey to get feedback on options that school districts are exploring to help students address learning loss and catch up.

5 Concrete Ideas for Getting Kids Back to School. This Chalkbeat Article has some useful ideas for re-entry: Extend the School Day or School Year; Provide Extra Tutoring, Particularly for Those that are Behind; Loop Elementary Schools Teachers with the same group of students; Expand, or at least avoid cutting, the number of adults prepared to help students with trauma and mental health needs; Integrate coronavirus into the curriculum.

Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies has developed Minimum Standards for Education: Preparedness, Response, Recovery that articulates the minimum level of educational quality and access in emergencies through to recovery. Resources include tools, case studies and other materials in multiple languages.


Visible Learning Effect Sizes When Schools Are Closed: What Matters and What Does Not. The key messages are:

- Do not panic if our kids miss 10 or so weeks
- If your system has school holidays, then have a holiday from schooling
- Worry more about subjects in which parents have the least skill and about subjects and tasks where parents make kids skill and drill and lose the thrill (especially math)
• Make sure to provide opportunities to learn what students do not know and do not engage them in busy work
• It is not the time in class, but what we do in the time we have, that matters

State Resources

Alabama SEAL Task Force- SUPERINTENDENT’S EXTENDING ACCESS TO LEARNING (SEAL) TASK FORCE. Dr. Mackey convened the Alabama SEAL Task Force to address short-and long-term priorities related to reopening Alabama schools. This task force is comprised of educators and business stakeholders and is divided into 5 subcommittees to begin addressing specific subcomponents related to effectively reopening Alabama schools. They are currently conducting a survey of state superintendents on reopening options and on the impact of COVID-10 on Alabama Schools. See here for further information. (See below for more on WV's Task Force to address re-entry. Other states, such as KY, are also convening TFs on re-entry.)

Colorado Department of Education in partnership with the Colorado Education Initiative conducted the Colorado School District Community Needs Inventory. Get Help Now to manage donations to meet needs. The report of the district needs inventory was released on April 21, 2020, see here.

Delaware School Resource Hub- includes Leadership Toolkits, Grab and Go, and other resources.

• Diagnostic Tool to Determine Where to Get Started- Heirarchy of Needs and Aspirations for Student Culture and Learning During Distance Learning, and videos.
• Managed by Instruction Partners
• 6 Leadership Toolkits based on these areas (Re-entry Leadership Toolkit coming soon, not yet
Louisiana conducted a Distance Learning survey of districts which included questions on plans for re-entry. As of April “70 percent of school systems that responded are contingency planning on offering summer school, but only 28 percent are contingency planning on starting the school year earlier.”

- Also see Continuous Education Toolkits for School Systems on different topics- staffing, English learners, families. Briefly addresses re-entry towards the end, with resources for remote hiring and a template for

Maine- Silver Linings from Commissioner Makin: Clear communication is important in a time of crisis. A number of commissioners and leaders have posted videos to families on their websites. I found this one to be particularly inspiring.

- It’s possible that we’re demonstrating capacity for never having to make up “snow days” in the future!
- We have a perfect opportunity to redesign our state assessment system!
- Every time we do something kind or selfless to benefit someone else, we get a bump of serotonin … It even works when we simply observe someone being kind to someone else!
- Amid the fear and loss and physical disconnection, watch empathy, compassion, and humanity shining like the North Star – far above the fray.
- We will emerge from this better than we’ve ever been.

Utah’s Three Phases of Recovery Model provides a framework for the future to prioritize the goals and activities that schools should engage in. It is helpful to provide clarity and direction in a time of crisis.

West Virginia’s Pre-K through Grade 5 Taskforce has been operational since 2013, and focuses on the major components of a comprehensive approach to early and elementary learning for our state. The Task Force will begin the development of a document to address the re-entry process for children when they return to school.

(Multi-State) Southern Regional Education Board, K-12 Education Recovery Task Force. Established to help states determine the best strategies for re-opening K-12 public schools, providing each student with the support they need, and planning for a possible COVID-19 resurgence and future emergencies

Out of the Ordinary -- Resources from Other Fields and/or Situations Planning for Re-entry to School

A Reentry Education Model Supporting Education and Career Advancement For Low-Skill Individuals in Corrections. This document has some useful logic models and flow charts that may be adapted to guide thinking and planning. https://nicic.gov/reentry-education-model-supporting-education-and-career-advancement-low-skill-individuals or https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae/pi/AdultEd/reentry-model.pdf

Return to School Student Support Plan. This idea can be adapted for teachers and families to develop tailored support plans for children. https://headspace.org.au/assets/Uploads/Return-to-School-Student-Support-Plan-print.pdf