Reopening Schools During COVID-19:

Understanding Possible Models, Stakeholder Needs, and Best Practices to Advance Educational Equity

MAEC

Introduction

How can states, school districts, schools, and educators prepare for more equitable continued learning during COVID-19? Educators, family members, and students across the country are asking this question in anxious preparation of school reopenings in fall 2020. Educators face the urgent duty of ensuring the physical health and safety of their students, staff, and families while considering the best ways to address students' social-emotional and development needs, not to mention their academic growth and success. To help educators consider the needs of all stakeholders and prepare equitable reopening and teaching plans for the fall, MAEC identified three research questions:

1) What models exist for school reentry?
2) How are schools, local education agencies (LEAs), and state education agencies (SEAs) assessing stakeholder needs (educators, families, students) as they consider reopening?
3) What are the best practices for distance learning during COVID-19 and during remote learning, in general?

This literature review gathers resources from government agencies, nonprofits, newspapers, and teachers unions to identify the best practices for educators, families, and students regarding how to center equity when addressing COVID-19 and reopening schools in the fall. The resources specifically identify the impact of COVID-19 on students of color, English Learners, LGBTQIA+ students, rural students, students experiencing homelessness, students with disabilities/diverse needs, and undocumented students.

Guidance is dependent on the current impact of the pandemic and may change over time.

Table of Contents

1. What models exist for school reentry?

Models for school reentry prioritize health and safety of students' physical, social, and emotional well-being above all. Many models emphasize the importance of identifying the most vulnerable students and addressing their needs first. There are three popular models for school reopening: remote, hybrid, and in-person. These models balance various considerations, including (but not limited to) access to technologies, staffing schedules, the length of the school day, and the school budget. Thought leaders urge states and districts to redesign their traditional school model to address educational inequities (e.g., establishing clear grade-level competencies, redesigning teacher and administrator training, and involving families more deeply in education practices).

For a quick overview, please see:
- Practical Guides for reopening - A Plan to Safely Reopen America's Schools and Communities, Playbook in Progress: K-12 Education Recovery, and Guidelines for Reopening Schools
- An examination of existing models - Decision Points for Covid Comeback Models
- Educational reform - In the Wake of the Coronavirus, We Must Design and Build the Schools We Need--Not Simply Reopen the Schools As They Were

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Guidance from Public Health Organizations

Considerations for Schools **Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**	The CDC, the preeminent public health disease control institute in the United States, created guidance on specific actions that students, teachers, administrators, and staff should take to slow the spread of COVID-19. This document outlines behaviors to reduce the spread of coronavirus, maintain healthy environments, support healthy operations, and prepare for when someone gets sick.
All AAP | AAP **American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)**	The AAP compiled a set of recommendations addressing issues within organized student activities, school reopenings, and general childcare. They include guidance on physical distancing measures (including in specific enclosed spaces), cleaning and disinfection, testing and screening, face coverings and PPE, and on-site school based health services. Their recommendations on physical distancing measures are organized by population: pre-K, elementary school, secondary school, and students with disabilities.

General Resources

Restart & Recovery: Considerations for Teaching and Learning Overview **Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)**	CCSSO provides guidance for state education agencies and local school districts considering conditions for learning, academics, and system conditions. Page 4 outlines possible challenges for three teaching and learning scenarios: in-person, remote, and hybrid. Page 11 includes embedded links to planning and implementation guides and toolkits.
Guidance on Culturally Responsive-Sustaining School Reopenings: Centering Equity to Humanize the Process of Coming Back Together **NYU Steinhardt**	This 17-page document considers the adjustments needed to reopen schools. It is divided into five sections, led by five questions: (1) What is the desired system or set of environments for students based in a radical re-imagining of how we do schools? (2) How should different stakeholders use the summer to prepare for fall reopenings? (3) What do district and school leaders need to know, think about, and do when reopening schools? (4) What do teachers need to know, think about, and do when reopening schools? (5) What do students need to know, think about, and do when reopening schools?
A Blueprint for Back to School **American Enterprise Institute**	Drawing from the insight of educational leaders, this report advises schools on reopening across six topics: school operations, whole child supports, school personnel, academics, remote learning, and other general considerations. Topics are divided into subsections (e.g., "schedules and learning time") and guidance is provided in bullet points.
Return to School Roadmap **Opportunity Labs**	This document provides multiple checklists that itemize essential actions for school leaders to do before and after schools open. There are six categories for the checklists: governance, wellness, instruction, facilities, school operations, and technology. These checklists are formatted to be printable.
In the Wake of the Coronavirus, We Must Design and Build the Schools We Need--Not Simply Reopen the Schools As They Were	This thought piece, by Khalilah Harris, identifies ways in which American education systems will need to change during and after COVID-19 in order to truly center equity and meet the needs of all students. The first half of the article describes student needs, while the second half

Center for American Progress	illuminates possible solutions and changes in the future.
Virginia's Return to School Plan **Virginia Department of Education**	This link goes to page 13, where the Virginia Department of Education outlines what it means to center equity in the plan to return to school. Pages 13 and 14 include "key steps to ensuring equity during Covid" and "ten return to school equity strategies."
How to Reopen Schools: A 10-Point Plan Putting Equity at the Center **Getting Smart**	This guide describes an actionable to-do list for educators preparing to re-open schools. The 10 steps are: (1) organize and mobilize; (2) develop reopening scenarios; (3) embrace financial stewardship in the face of uncertainty; (4) staff and schedule for flexibility and differentiation; (5) reconnect and reassess; (6) practice agency and prioritize engagement; (7) make use of data and systems to improve educational continuity; (8) reimagine approaches to core school systems; (9) iterate and communicate, and; (10) consider the worst, but model the best.
Guidelines for Reopening Schools **AASA, The School Superintendents' Association**	This guide centers around 10 principles for school reopening, along with action steps to help district leaders and staff operationalize these principles. The 10 principles address health, safety, technology, social-emotional learning, trauma-informed staff, professional learning, and budget issues.
Decision Points for Covid Comeback Models **Education Resources Strategies (ERS)**	This guide focuses primarily on the kinds of instructional delivery approaches districts must weigh for the 2020-21 school year (traditional in-person, remote learning, or a blended approach). This guide is useful for weighing the tradeoffs of these options, and offering creative advice for possible hybrid models of instruction.
A Plan To Safely Reopen America's Schools and Communities **American Federation of Teachers (AFT)**	This guide from the AFT broadly examines what will need to happen for the safe reopening of K-12 schools, colleges, and hospitals. Specific guidance and action steps are divided across five sections: (1) maintaining physical distancing until the number of new cases declines for at least 14 days; (2) putting in place the infrastructure and resources to test, trace, and isolate new cases; (3) deploying the public health tools that prevent the virus' spread and aligning them with

education strategies to meet the needs of students; (4) involving workers, unions, parents, and communities in all planning, and; (5) investing in recovery.

2. How are schools, local education agencies (LEAs), and state education agencies (SEAs) assessing stakeholder needs (educators, families, students) as they consider reopening?

Resources below answer a related question: what needs should schools, LEAs, and SEAs consider as they plan to reopen? Nonprofits, policymakers, and teachers' unions urge schools, LEAs, and SEAs to consider community needs, potential technology barriers, food insecurity, staffing concerns, and other challenges with respect to their stakeholders. In summer 2020, LEAs are assessing stakeholder needs through town halls and community-wide surveys in order to inform their reopening plans. See here for the surveys and (for some) survey results for Boston Public Schools, Baltimore City, Prince George's County, New York City Public Schools, and the School District of Philadelphia. In their survey questions, these five LEAs assess stakeholder needs through questions regarding social-emotional well-being, technology use, school reopening safety measures, transportation to and from school, and child care. LEAs that have already collected survey results categorized responses by stakeholder group (e.g., how do *teachers* feel about returning to school in-person? How do *parents* feel?).

These three resources provide valuable equity-centered frameworks for schools and LEAs:
- COVID-19 School Reopening Checklist
- 10 Questions for Equity Advocates to Ask About Distance Learning
- Essential Questions for 2020-2021 Reopening

Guidance is dependent on the current impact of the pandemic and may change over time.

General Resources

[COVID-19 School Reopening Checklist](#) **Johns Hopkins University & e-School+ Initiative**	This checklist suggests questions for school leaders to consider when reopening schools in order to equitably meet the needs of students from vulnerable populations. There are seven sections: (1) creating a snapshot of at-risk populations, (2) continuity of learning, (3) facilities/school restructuring and infection control, (4) food security, (5) health services, (6) supervision, and (7) housing/safety. The checklist primarily focuses on student needs, although section five (health services) includes one subsection on teacher wellness.
[10 Questions for Equity Advocates to Ask About Distance Learning](#) **Digital Promise & The Education Trust**	This tool suggests 10 questions that equity advocates and school district leaders should consider when planning how to continue supporting their students. Each question describes the underlying problem behind the question and lists possible strategies to address the problem. Questions 6-8 are geared toward educator and family needs, and the remainder focus on student needs.
[Essential Questions for 2020-2021 Reopening: A Planning Workbook for Education Leaders](#) **Bellwether Education Partners**	This strategic planning tool, in the form of an Excel spreadsheet, provides a framework for school leaders as they consider what reopening will look like for their school community. It includes planning tools for a four-phase approach focused on regrounding, prioritizing needs across various possible scenarios, planning with clear tasks, timelines and responsibilities, and connecting with stakeholders. Each section considers how to assess the needs of educators, students, and family members.
[District COVID-19 Response and Reopening Planning Tool](#) **Collaborative for Student Success & Center for Reinventing Public Education**	This tool is intended to guide and evaluate school district planning in response to COVID-19. It includes eight categories to consider: (1) clear, inclusive, and regular communication; (2) structured and meaningful 2020-2021 learning plan; (3) clear fall reopening plan; (4) effective resource allocation; (5) educational services and vulnerable populations; (6) support to staff; (7) health and safety measures in place, and; (8) equitable access to education for all students. Each of the categories include different response examples.

<u>All Hands on Deck: Initial Guidance Regarding Reopening School Buildings</u> **National Education Association (NEA)**	NEA released guidance for states and school districts to consider when reopening schools in the fall. The guidance suggests items for consideration in the form of questions (e.g., "Can the school provide sufficient soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol content, and face masks to students, faculty, and staff?"). On pages 33-34, the NEA includes a 15-point checklist to assess accessibility to a well-rounded education, instructional leadership and communication, student safety and family services, healthy schools, and support for quality educators.
<u>Coronavirus and the Classroom: Executive Summary</u> → <u>This document</u> (*Coronavirus and the Classroom: Recommendations for Prioritizing Equity in the Response to COVID-19*) is the longer version of the above. **Alliance for Excellent Education**	This two-page document consolidates recommendations from various equity-oriented organizations, including the Center for American Progress, The Education Trust, and Teach Plus. It offers descriptions on how to support states and districts craft an equity-focused response in education to COVID-19, specifically targeting student needs.
<u>Preparing to Reopen: Six Principles That Put Equity at the Core</u> **Getting Smart**	This guide outlines six principles and identifies questions to ask to address the needs of vulnerable students, including students with disabilities, English Learners, and families in the new education system during and after COVID-19. The six principles are: (1) do no harm; (2) be intentional with seats at the table; (3) empower teachers to meet student needs; (4) apply principles of Universal Design for Learning to the preparation process; (5) privilege what you already know works, and; (6) learn from the bright spots.
<u>A Blueprint for Back to School</u> **EducationNext**	This article describes specific actions that state policymakers, district staff, and school leaders should consider when planning for reopening. The categories are general considerations, school operations, whole child supports, school personnel, academics, and distance learning. The category of "academics" suggests dynamic ways to assess student needs, including taking this opportunity to pilot new assessments at the beginning of the school year as a diagnostic for parents and teachers.

<u>Social-Emotional Needs First. Standards and Accountability Later.</u> **Bellwether Education Partners**	This resource, written by Beth Tek and Elisha Nelson-Reed, highlights the importance of teachers and student caregivers first meeting students' basic needs and slowing down the pace of academic instruction. Ultimately, the article advises that educators should first craft their learning plans around social and emotional support and trauma-informed practices.
<u>Understanding, Measuring, and Addressing Student Learning Needs During COVID-19 Recovery</u> **Policy Analysis for California Education (PACE)**	This policy paper, published in May 2020, focuses on California K-12 public education, and suggests guidelines that could be applied to other states. It advocates for a statewide diagnostic test to assess student academic and social-emotional needs as well as general well-being, and then channeling resources to meet those identified needs.

3. What are the best practices for remote learning?
(A) During COVID-19; (B) Remote learning, in general

(A)   During COVID-19

The resources and literature listed below illustrate best practices for remote learning during COVID-19. The key best practices are (**a**) social-emotional learning (with a focus on addressing professional development and understanding the whole child), (**b**) financial investment in summer learning, and (**c**) ensuring students from diverse backgrounds are receiving an equitable education.

Below are three key resources whose research addresses all three concepts:
- <u>From Response to Reopening: State Efforts to Elevate Social and Emotional Learning During the Pandemic</u>
- <u>An Initial Guide to Leveraging the Power of Social and Emotional Learning As You Prepare to Reopen and Renew Your School Community</u>
- <u>What comes next for public schooling</u>

General Resources

<u>An Initial Guide to Leveraging the Power of Social and Emotional Learning As You Prepare to Reopen and Renew Your School Community</u>	This guide outlines actionable recommendations to help educators plan for the social-emotional needs of students and adults as schools transition into summer and the new school year. The guide is organized to address four critical actions: (1) take time to build partnerships, deepen your

Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)	understanding, and plan for social-emotional learning (SEL); (2) design opportunities for adults to connect, heal, and cultivate their own SEL competencies and capacities; (3) create emotionally and physically safe, supportive, and engaging learning environments that promote all students' social and emotional development, and; (4) use data as an opportunity to deepen relationships and continuously improve support for students, families, and staff.
From Response to Reopening: State Efforts to Elevate Social and Emotional Learning During the Pandemic **CASEL**	Based on CASEL's review of states' COVID-19 responses related to SEL, they provide six recommendations to continue supporting SEL in preparation for the fall. The six recommendations are: (1) communicate SEL as important for all students and adults; (2) define and coordinate SEL and mental health supports; (3) disseminate SEL practices in the time of the pandemic; (4) provide professional learning and support for adult SEL competencies, capacities, and wellness; (5) leverage data for continuous improvement, and; (6) encourage use of funds.
What comes next for public schooling **The Hill**	This article, co-authored by former Secretary of Education, John King, and AFT president, Randi Weingarten, discusses the impact of remote learning on the future of education. They urge two concrete steps moving forward: invest in summer school, and give educators more flexibility to teach students more effectively.
Educator tips for supporting stressed-out students during COVID-19 **Brookes Publishing**	Four education authors share tips for strengthening connections with students, and helping students cope with stress and anxiety. This article is written for adults in students' lives (e.g., educators, counselors, and family members).
4 Strategies for Supporting Students' Social and Emotional Well-Being Remotely **The Journal**	This resource provides four strategies for educators to use to check in with students about their socio-emotional well-being, including an example of how to put the strategies into practice. The four strategies are: (1) breathing techniques; (2) stretching exercises; (3) visualization techniques, and; (4) self-affirmation.
Salient Themes from a Developmental Perspective: A guide for teachers for supporting	This resource suggests activities for educators to implement to support the emotional development of young children, ages 4-8. The article is built around four

young children's emotional development during the COVID 19 Pandemic **The Center for Emotionally Responsive Practice at Bank Street College**	developmental themes: (1) strengthening object constancy; (2) power vs. powerlessness; (3) hurt and healing, and; (4) together and apart. Activities include treasure hunts, book suggestions, and drawing superpowers.
Social-Emotional Learning Should Be Priority During COVID-19 Crisis **neaTODAY**	This article draws on teachers' innovative ways of incorporating social-emotional learning activities during remote learning, such as end-of-the-week check-ins with students and daily discussion board posts. Recommended by the National Education Association, this article also includes resources promoting SEL in the classroom.
Webinar | Universal Design for Learning to Support Remote Learning **EDUCAUSE**	Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a framework that provides flexibility in how information is presented, the ways in which students respond or demonstrate knowledge and skills, and student engagement practices. This webinar describes how educators can apply UDL to remote instruction, discusses best practices, and provides resources to help educators integrate UDL into their courses and programs.

English Learners (ELLs)

Stephen Krashen's Seven Tips for Teaching Language During Covid-19 **Language Magazine**	This resource provides tips for teachers and parents to teach language during remote learning. The seven tips are: (1) less traditional instruction may be a good thing; (2) remote learning can easily support language acquisition; (3) parents should share heritage language at home; (4) encourage students to read fiction; (5) avoid self-instruction language learning texts; (6) find out if your library is open online, and; (7) language scholars should increase access to publications.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, Intersex, Asexual + (LGBTQIA+) students

In Response to COVID-19: A Checklist to Support LGBTQ Students During Distance Learning **Human Rights Campaign (HRC) & National Education**	This 1-page checklist suggests ways that educators can create a safe and affirming space for students during distance (remote) learning. The action steps to support LGBTQIA+ students are grounded in needs identified from the HRC's 2018 LGBTQ youth report.

Association (NEA)	
[Supporting LGBTQ Students During Social Distancing](#) **Teaching Tolerance**	This Q&A (question & answer) with experts from The Trevor Project outlines recommendations for ways that educators and family members can support LGBTQIA+ students during coronavirus school closures. The article answers seven questions, outlining specific steps and actions that educators and family members can take during remote learning, such as making office hours to support students, and connecting LGBTQIA+ youth through [TrevorSpace](#).

Rural Students

[Redesign required: Principles for reimagining federal rural policy in the COVID-19 era](#) *Brookings*	This article provides information on the impact of COVID-19 on rural communities, and presents principles to guide policymakers and agencies to maximize the development return of federal investment in rural and tribal communities. The principles are: (1) support local ownership and strategies; (2) invest in people and institutions; (3) increase flexibility and align federal and state funds to meet local needs; (4) measure and reward outcomes, and; (5) embrace a regional mindset.
[Webinar: What's being done to address the growing US digital divide](#) *Center for Technology Innovation at Brookings*	This 1-hour webinar highlights the growing digital divide that impacts rural students and educators (among others) and what federal agencies and local leaders are doing to identify and mitigate the challenges. The webinar answers these four questions: (1) How has this online shift affected those without steady internet access? (2) What short- and long-term strategies are being deployed to address disparities in digital access? (3) What areas are most profoundly impacted by digital exclusion? and (4) How are the needs of rural Americans, whose communities are already deeply affected by weak broadband infrastructure, being addressed?

Students with Disabilities/Diverse Learning Needs

<u>Addressing the Risk of COVID-19 in Preschool, Elementary and Secondary Schools While Serving Children with Disabilities</u> **United States Department of Education**	This five-page brief provides federal guidance on how educational institutions can offer educational programs through remote instruction while ensuring compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), †Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (Section 504), and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Pages 4-5 describe possible extensions on IDEA timelines (e.g., in the case of state complaints or due process hearings).
<u>Serving Students With Disabilities During the COVID-19 Crisis: Spotlight on Policy & Practice</u> Part 2: Family-School Collaboration **National Center for Learning Disabilities**	This resource, targeted at educators and caregivers of students with disabilities, provides answers to common questions and strategies for providing a free and appropriate public education to children with learning disabilities. The frequently asked questions (FAQs) section asks and answers two questions: (1) How can a school or district ensure that parents of students with disabilities are included in decisions about their child's education? and (2) Can parents file a due process complaint for failure to meet FAPE?

Students Experiencing Homelessness

COVID-19 and Homelessness: Strategies for Schools, Early Learning Programs, and Higher Education Institutions **SchoolHouse Connection**	This resource compiles strategies to meet the educational and service needs of children and youth experiencing homelessness. It includes FAQs; checklists, guides, and strategies; upcoming and archived webinars; guest perspectives; policy updates on COVID-19 and homelessness; homeless education in the news; and resources from federal agencies and partner organizations.
Five Strategies to Help Homeless Youth Transition to College During COVID-19 **SchoolHouse Connection**	This resource provides five strategies educators can utilize to help youth experiencing homelessness prepare for college. The five strategies are (1) provide a FAFSA determination letter to every high school senior who was identified as an unaccompanied homeless youth before school closures, or who is identified as an unaccompanied homeless youth after school closures; (2) assist unaccompanied homeless youth in obtaining access to Wi-Fi and devices necessary for college applications and for filing the FAFSA; (3) assist school counselors to implement their responsibilities to prepare youth experiencing homelessness for college; (4) assist unaccompanied homeless youth who return to seek help with subsequent-year verifications of their status for the FAFSA, and; (5) reach out to the financial aid offices of local colleges to offer help and to share information about COVID-19 and other resources for youth experiencing homelessness.

Undocumented Students

As Educators Grapple With COVID-19 Challenges, Supporting Undocumented Students & Families Must Be a Priority **The 74 Million**	This resource highlights the need for a trauma-informed approach to virtual learning for undocumented students that centers on students' physiological and safety needs. The author, Vanessa Luna, from ImmSchools, urges educators to adopt the following practices to support undocumented communities: (1) adopt a trauma-informed lens in virtual learning; (2) stay informed; (3) share resources with families in multiple languages; (4) implement immigrant-friendly policies; (5) inform families about their health care rights; (6) advocate and support undocumented families and students, and; (7) recognize their resilience and power.

Our Undocumented Community Needs Support in Addressing COVID-19 Una versión de este artículo está disponible también en español aquí. **The Next 100**	This resource highlights the challenges for undocumented students and families to access resources. It offers recommendations that schools, districts, and government agencies can use to mitigate some of these challenges. The author, Rosario Quiroz Villarreal, provides advice on recommended legislation, healthcare coverage, ICE, and DACA.
Tangible Support for Immigrant Communities During COVID-19 **Immigrants Rising**	This 9-page list of resources helps undocumented communities navigate COVID-19. The google doc is organized in the following categories: (1) addressing fear and coping with stress during infectious disease outbreaks; (2) health access and guidance regarding COVID-19; (3) connecting to free/low-cost resources; (4) relief funds; (5) legal rights and supports for workers; (6) supporting businesses and freelancers; (7) housing; (8) K-12 resources; (9) organizing and action-oriented; (10) other resources for immigrant communities; (11) federal government updates; (12) social distancing; (13) up-to-date tracking of COVID-19 cases worldwide, and; (14) about us (Immigrants Rising).

(B)   Remote Learning, in general

The resources below are organized by three categories: general resources, resources for English Learners (ELLs), and resources for students with disabilities/diverse learning needs.

The resources for remote learning generally affirm the importance of asynchronous learning, availability through various means of communication, creating opportunities for student collaboration, and providing materials in various formats. The resources that outline best practices for supporting ELLs include leveraging students' home language(s) and culture(s), connecting the curriculum to students' lived experiences, and developing students' home language(s) in tandem with the development of English skills. To address students with diverse needs during online instruction, resources recommend incorporating movement breaks and self-reflection, and providing accessible materials (screen reader friendly text, subtitles/closed-captions).

The resources which best address these three categories are
   1. G*eneral*: 9 Best Practices for Distance Ed
   2. *ELLs*: 6 Key Considerations for Supporting English Learners with Distance Learning
   3. *Students with disabilities/diverse learning needs*: 8 Tips To Improve eLearning Accessibility For Online Learners With Special Needs

General Resources

9 Best Practices for Distance Ed **DaVinci Ed**	This article, geared to educators who are transitioning to remote teaching, suggests possible solutions and best practices to combat common problems in distance (remote) learning. The nine best practices offered are: (1) office hours (flexibility, groups, efficiency, focused) (2) student collaboration; (3) small group learning; (4) recorded video; (5) student discussion; (6) breakout groups; (7) backchannels where students can ask questions or add comments without interrupting the flow of the live event; (8) asynchronous learning, and; (9) flipping the classroom.
UDL Best Practices for Distance Learning **Understood**	Planning with UDL as an essential strategy proactively reduces barriers to learning so all students can access and engage with their education. This resource provides six best practices on how to include all students during remote learning: (1) explicitly teach expectations and engagement; (2) allow for asynchronous learning; (3) assign note-takers; (4) make materials accessible; (5)

English Learners (ELLs)

[6 Key Considerations for Supporting English Learners with Distance Learning](#) **Sobrato Early Academic Language (SEAL)**	This article poses the question: what considerations for distance learning do teachers need to make in order to place English Learners at the forefront? This resource answers the question by providing six research-based considerations and suggestions for how to scaffold distance (remote) learning to more effectively support the educational needs of ELLs.
[Teaching Multilingual Learners Online](#) **WIDA**	WIDA identifies unique opportunities and challenges for multilingual learners in online environments. They organized its guidance around the ten 2019 WIDA Guiding Principles of Language Development. Under each guiding principle, the article identifies what teachers and multilingual learners can do to be more successful, and provides examples and resources to accomplish these goals.
[Distance Learning for ELLs](#) **Colorin Colorado**	This document offers planning tools, strategies, and recommended resources to help educators plan distance (remote) learning for ELLs. Resources include tips on how to improve ELLs' social-emotional learning in a virtual classroom, infographics on remote learning, and considerations for school responses to COVID-19.

Students with Disabilities/Diverse Learning Needs

[Keeping Students With Learning Disabilities Motivated at Home](#) **Edutopia**	This resource provides strategies for high school students with learning disabilities while learning at home. The author, Daniel Volrath, suggests six ways for students to stay focused and motivated: (1) harness strategic procrastination; (2) understand sleep patterns; (3) walk and learn; (4) reflect on learning; (5) practice mindful hyperfocus, and; (6) take sensory breaks.
[8 Tips To Improve eLearning Accessibility For Online Learners With Special Needs](#)	This article describes eight obstacles that students with special needs often face, and how educators can mitigate these obstacles in order to make online learning

eLearning Industry	more accessible. To improve accessibility, the author, Christopher Pappas, advises (1) using asynchronous learning; (2) providing subtitles/closed captions and audio-based resources; (3) creating and using materials that are screen-reader friendly; (4) allowing students to choose a learning path that doesn't require engagement with peer(s), and; (5) reinforcing and refreshing students on previously taught material.

Reopening Plans by State – Region I

State education agencies (SEAs) are continuing to revise their reentry plans, while considering their stakeholders and state-specific issues. Below are the current plans for reentry published by SEAs in Region I: Connecticut, Delaware, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, Vermont, the Virgin Islands, and West Virginia. SEAs and LEAs will finalize decisions in the coming month, prior to the start of the school year.

Plans remain a working document necessarily because of the nature of the pandemic and the surges that may take place in various geographic locations. Flexibility and adaptation is key during this time. Please see "additional resources" in each appendix for more resources in your state.

Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE)	CSDE advises LEAs to return to in-person instruction in the fall, as long as public health data supports this model. Their reopening model outlines guidance addressing the operations plan, health practices and protocols, health monitoring plan, containment plan, remote learning, academics, family and student engagement, career and technical engagement, and staffing and personnel.
Delaware Department of Education (DDOE)	Delaware Governor Carney has not yet announced whether students will start the school year in person. DDOE published guidance in preparing for three possible scenarios: in-person instruction, hybrid model, and remote learning. DDOE provides planning recommendations in the form of multiple checklists, preparing for before schools open and when schools open. Their recommendations cover health, social distancing, well-being, cleaning, budget, staff, transportation, educational equity, technology, dining, and extracurricular activities.
Kentucky Department of Education (KDE)	In Kentucky, LEAs will decide how to reopen their schools in the fall. KDE has published various guidance documents under "KDE Reopening Guidance," advising on school district personnel leave options, extended school year services, preschoolers, instruction, workplace health and safety, and facilities. KDE's "Guidance and Safety Expectations and Best Practices" document is available in English, Spanish, Nepali, Arabic, Somali, and Chinese.
Maine Department of Education (MDOE)	MDOE has mandated that all school administrative units (SAUs) develop an in-person, hybrid, and remote learning plan. The decision by SAUs to reopen schools depends upon their local county's risk of COVID-19 and their administrative unit's capacity for implementing health and safety requirements. MDOE's framework for returning to classroom instruction considers physical health and safety; social, emotional, behavioral, and mental health; academic programs and student learning, and; expectations for hybrid and remote learning.
Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE)	MSDE leaves the decision to LEAs on how to reopen their schools, although the MSDE emphasizes a priority on in-person learning. MSDE requires LEAs to publish plans by August 14, 2020, and to include certain steps within their plans. The guidance document includes sections on research, educational equity, communication, instructional programs, support programs, professional learning, information regarding educators, preparation and services, student services, and continuity of learning.

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)	DESE has mandated that all districts and schools create three plans for operating in the fall: 1) in-person learning with new safety requirements; 2) a hybrid of in-person and remote learning, and; 3) remote learning. DESE's research-driven guidance document includes information on contextual factors, how to support educators and staff, new health and safety requirements, district and school fall reopening plans, checklist for initial fall reopening steps, and special education guidance.
New Hampshire Department of Education (NHDOE)	With the help of multiple taskforces, NHDOE has developed a framework that addresses three possible modes of reentry: 1) full access, 2) limited, and 3) no access. For example, limited access will consist of cohorts who receive a mixture of classroom instruction and remote learning strategies on alternating schedules. Their guidance document includes taskforce operations, framework concepts, possible instruction models, the list of workgroups and meeting times, and 10 relevant resources (news articles and examples of impactful school responses).
New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE)	NJDOE provides "Anticipated Minimum Standards" for school districts to adhere to as they prepare to reopen schools with in-person, hybrid, or virtual learning environments. This document provides guidance on conditions for learning, leadership and planning, policy and funding, continuity of learning, and future considerations.
New York State Education Department (NYSED)	NYSED provides guidance for school districts as they prepare to make the decision to open with in-person, hybrid, or remote learning environments. NYSED guides LEAs on health and safety, facilities, nutrition, transportation, social-emotional well-being, school schedules, budgets and fiscal, attendance and chronic absenteeism, technology and connectivism, teaching and learning, special education, bilingual education and world languages, staffing, and athletics and extracurricular activities.
Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE)	PDE advises a phased reopening plan based on Governor Wolf's Plan to Reopen Pennsylvania, which has a red phase (remote learning), yellow phase (in-person, deep precautions), and green phase (in-person learning). Their guidance emphasizes health and safety plan requirements and considerations for LEAs to include in the plans that they submit to the PDE.
Puerto Rico Departmento de Educación (DE)	Puerto Rico does not have published guidelines for schools preparing to reopen in the fall. This link provides information about COVID-19 safety measures, methods for alternative communication and teaching, special communications, frequently asked questions, and government documents.

Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE)	RIDE delegates decision-making on school reopenings to LEAs and schools. LEAs and schools must create and submit three plans for operation in the fall: 1) in-person, 2) hybrid; and 3) distance learning. RIDE published guidance divided into action-driven checklists across the categories of planning and governance, teaching and learning, wellness and safety, and professional learning and supports.
Vermont Agency of Education (VTED)	VTED will pursue a step-based reopening approach, with each step determined by indicators related to COVID-19: Step I (remote learning); Step II (in-person with enhanced distancing measures); and Step III (in-person). Vermont will plan to reopen schools in the fall at Step II, although schools may adjust their plans throughout the school year. VTED provides guidance on COVID-19 coordination and training, student and staff health considerations, school day considerations, facial coverings and personal protective equipment, and operational and facilities considerations.
Virgin Islands Department of Education (VIDE)	VIDE advises schools to be prepared to move between three phases based on the escalation or de-escalation of COVID-19: green (in-person instruction), yellow (hybrid of virtual and in-person instruction), and red (virtual instruction). This document provides guidance on maintaining healthy environments, mask/face coverings, bus transportation, scenarios when staff/students get COVID-19, protecting vulnerable populations, hygiene and wellness, student meals, transitioning, public health signage, and practicing prevention.
West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE)	LEAs can determine whether to reopen in the fall using a fully remote, hybrid, or in-person model. WVDE describes possible re-entry scenarios, and offers guidance on instruction/learning; physical, social-emotional, and mental health wellness; career technical education; child nutrition; special education; safe schools and transportation; finance; extracurricular/extended activities, and; technology. Pages 19-25 include useful checklists and posters that can be printed for use in K-12 schools.